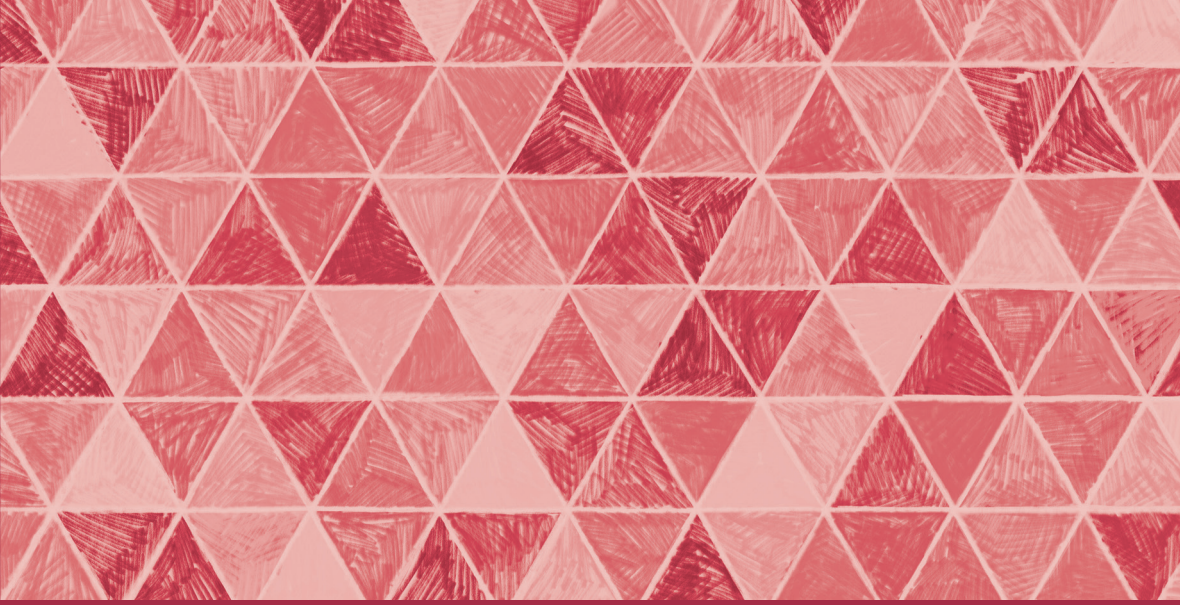


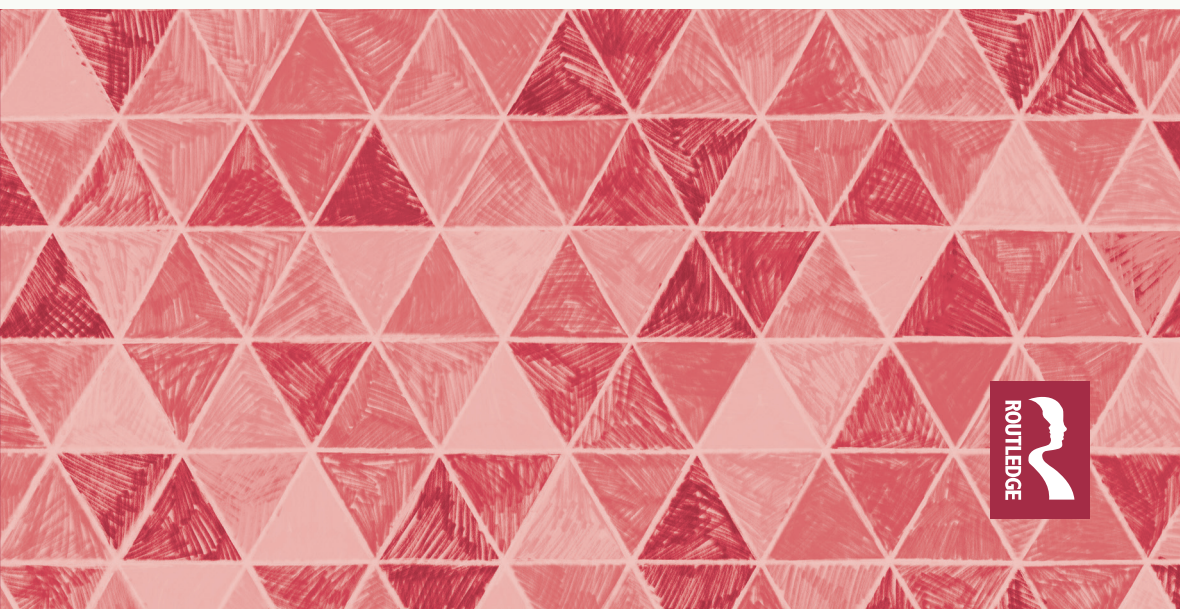
Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right

NORDIC FASCISM

FRAGMENTS OF AN ENTANGLED HISTORY

Edited by Nicola Karcher and Markus Lundström

Foreword by Roger Griffin



Nordic Fascism

Nordic Fascism is the first comprehensive history in English of fascism in the Nordic countries.

Transnational cooperation between radical nationalists has especially been the case in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland, where fascism has not only developed through interdependent processes but also through interactions between and beyond national boundaries, and where "racial relationship" has been a core argument. With chapters ranging from the inception of fascism in the interwar years up to the present day, this book offers the first fragments of an entangled history of Nordic fascism. It illuminates how *The North* occupies a special place in the fascist imagination, articulating ideas about the Nordic people resisting the supposed cultural degeneration, replacement, or annihilation of the white race. The authors map ideological exchange between fascist organisations in the Nordic countries and outline past and present attempts at pan-Nordic state building.

This book will appeal to scholars of fascism and Nordic history, and readers interested in the general history of fascism.

Nicola Karcher is a historian and an associate professor in social science at Østfold University College, Norway.

Markus Lundström is an economic historian and an associate professor in sociology at Uppsala University, Sweden.

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Nordic Fascism

Fragments of an Entangled History

Edited by
Nicola Karcher and Markus Lundström
with a foreword by Roger Griffin

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Heléne Lööw is an associate professor at the Department of History, Uppsala University, Sweden. Her dissertation from 1990 on the Swedish national socialist movements is still the standard work in this field. Lööw has held positions as a researcher at the universities of Gothenburg and Stockholm and in the Swedish National Research Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ). From 2000 to 2001, she worked at the Prime Minister's office in the Stockholm International Forum, combating intolerance, resulting in the establishment of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and the government agency Living History Forum, the latter of which she was director from 2003 to 2006. She took part in establishing the Centre for Police Research (CPR) at Uppsala University, which she headed from 2010 to 2013. Lööw's research covers fascism and national socialism; political violence, terrorism, and hate crimes (including the organisation and tactics of law enforcement); racism/white supremacy; and crime prevention/counter-terrorism. Lööw has served in several state commissions and inquiries on hate crime, racism, discrimination, and restitution issues regarding the Second World War, and on combating extremism. She was the Swedish representative in the European Commission against Racism and Crime from 1998 to 1999 and in the European Union Military Committee, where she was a member of the executive board from 2000 to 2004. Lööw is a member of the NORAS steering committee.

Markus Lundström holds a PhD in economic history, and he is an associate professor in sociology and affiliate researcher at the Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies on Racism (CEMFOR) at Uppsala University, Sweden. His historical-sociological publication record includes two research monographs and more than twenty peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. His fascism research focuses on how radical-nationalist ideas travel and transfigure through time. He recently published a co-authored

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Nordic Fascism and the Story of Coalescing Asteroids

Foreword by Roger Griffin

In the mid-1980s, I took the rash decision to apply to Oxford University to undertake a PhD in political science despite lacking the formal qualifications for such an endeavour. My aim was to use the framework of a postgraduate degree to construct a properly researched ideal-typical definition of generic fascism based on shared ideological patterns which I had noticed in the course of reading what fascists themselves claimed about their values and aims in English, Italian, German, Spanish, and French texts. Far from encountering academic encouragement for such a project, I was informed by several luminaries in the field that I was wasting my time because fascism as a living force was now "history" and of interest only to interwar historians. My enterprise was particularly pointless because fascism, as a spasm of irrational hatreds and a cluster of apocalyptic conspiracy theories, had no ideology.

Indeed, only a few years before embarking on my research, Canadian historian Gilbert Allardyce had announced that "fascism is not a generic concept" and that "the word *fascismo* has no meaning beyond Italy". Allardyce called in his article *What Fascism is Not* (1979) for the "deflation" of the term *fascist*, a draconian shrinking of its field of application, locking it back in its tight conceptual box so that it referred once again only to Mussolini's movement and regimes. This was obviously to dismiss out of hand the *Duce*'s own claim in the conclusion to *The Doctrine of Fascism* (1932) that "Fascism has now acquired throughout the world that universality which belongs to all doctrines which by achieving self-expression represent a moment in the history of human thought". After all, why listen to fascists about fascism? What did they know? And by extension, what did I know?

My enthusiasm for the project could not be dissipated by the cold water poured *ex cathedra* on the still painfully typewritten pages of my thesis. After all, I remained convinced that I had seen a unique pattern of ideas that had gone largely unnoticed by scholars till now, one that leapt out *objectively* from the hundreds of pages of primary sources that I had been processing. My plan was to promote this discovery as the starting point for a new era of collaborative international work on fascism by turning the thematic pattern into the basis of a "working definition".

I found myself in a position to offer a solution to what had been called "the fascist conundrum" because I could show *empirically* that a wide range of primary sources that articulated the fundamental aims of an extensive variety of putative fascisms pointed to the shared presence of a distinctive vision, one that set them apart from other radical rights, in particular conservative and religious forms of authoritarianism. This was the myth of the imminent Phoenix-like rebirth of an organically conceived nation from its present state of decadence within a regenerative *new order*. It was only when this myth is combined with ultranationalism that the Phoenix myth provided the specifically *fascist* license for political violence and systemic mass murder for the sake of the reborn people. Uncoupled from racial hatred, the Phoenix is just one symbol of the archetypal myth of renewal and regeneration found in rituals and religions all over the world with positive, life-enhancing connotations.

Confident that I had identified fascism's *mythic core*, not as an essence but as a heuristic device, I was faced with a terminological problem because no adjective could be formed from *rebirth*. I thus had recourse to an obscure (at least in English) term for renewal: *palingenesis*, which neatly formed the adjective *palingenetic*. Studying the central role of the *palingenetic ultranationalist* myth in varieties of the interwar right convinced me of its key role in distinguishing fascism as the revolutionary driving force of Fascism and Nazism and the numerous members of the fascist family which set them apart from other forms of right-wing authoritarianism promoted by such leaders as Salazar, Dollfuss, Piłsudski, von Papen, von Hindenburg, and Franco, as well as from the nationalist movements that were active in the interwar period with no totalising aspirations to create a radically new order.

It became increasingly obvious, at least to me, that the combination of ultranationalism with palingenetic myth generated the psychological drivers for the fascist bid to revolutionise not just the political state, but the economy, society, culture, geopolitical relations, and human nature itself, all demanding a totalising transformation to create a racially conceived resurrected nation inhabited by a new type of man and woman. In short, I had found a viable *fascist minimum*, the elusive Lowest Common Denominator, between the extremely varied interwar and post-war manifestations of palingenetic ultranationalism, one that could finally supply a concise, pragmatic generic definition to enable collaborative research in comparative fascist studies.

What was more important was that by the early 2000s, the approach to fascism as a revolutionary variant of organic nationalism was starting to inform the research of a new generation of scholars emerging all over the Europeanised world who were using the opportunity to rethink the official history of the radical or authoritarian right in their country through the lens of the concept *palingenetic ultranationalism*. Symbolic of this turn in fascist studies was George Mosse's *The Fascist Revolution* (1999), a collection of older essays whose title would have been shocking to most academics a decade earlier.

It is in this context the present volume on *Nordic Fascism* can be recognised as a welcome contribution to the Velvet Revolution that has been taking place since the 1990s. The essays it brings together in a single volume cumulatively illustrate the progress that has been made internationally since the palingenetic theory began to be recognised as providing a communal focus for genuine collaborative and comparative work on distinctive variants of fascist nationalism without energy being expended unproductively in agonising about issues of definition and taxonomy.

Before the 1990s, each contribution to fascist studies was necessarily a fragment of a non-existent whole. It was condemned by the lack of definitional consensus to be an idiosyncratic, isolated piece of research that did not fit together with the many other fragments that had appeared and thus were condemned to float infinitely through academic space with minimal impact like so many lonely, misshapen asteroids. The theory of palingenetic ultranationalism now exercises enough gravitational force to allow separate research areas and projects in fascist studies to harmonise and coalesce with others within a growing international community of scholars whose work on fascism is convergent rather than divergent. The result is ever greater cross-pollination between specialist studies either on themed topics (e.g., gender, imperialism, economics, racism, leadership, conspiracy theory) or, as here, within geographically demarcated areas.

There is now sufficient consensus over how fascism is conceived and defined for it to be possible for the first time for historians to establish the genealogical tree of the extended family of interwar fascisms which embraces not just abortive movements, some of them tiny, in Europe, but far-flung and significant ones in Brazil and South Africa, as well as less well-documented attempts to emulate them in China, Japan, India, and the Middle East. This working consensus has played a vital role in enabling political scientists to trace the genesis of interwar fascism's post-war and contemporary descendants such as the pseudo-democratic parties, negationism, disguised revolutionary movements, neo-Nazi cells, the metapolitical New Right, "black" terrorism, and cyberfascism, all of which exhibit mutated forms of interwar palingenetic ultranationalism. It has also made it possible to map its complex entanglements both with other forms of the illiberal right and with more distantly related socio-political and cultural phenomena hostile to civil democracy and liberal humanist values, such as antisemitic conspiracy theories, Manichaean forms of religious politics, and xenophobic forms of radical right populism.

The fact that the fruit of specialist research into fascism is at long last routinely carried out within a common conceptual matrix is alluded to in the subtitle of this book: *Fragments of an Entangled History*. Before the 1990s, efforts to produce such an anthology would have been doomed to incoherence by the lack of a widely accepted definition among the participants. The gossamer web of connective tissue underpinning the affinity between different manifestations of fascism, their transnational dynamics, and intersections with each other and with non-fascist phenomena would have been invisible.

Because of the implicitly shared recognition of the contributors to this book of the revolutionary challenge to liberal democracy mounted by fascism, the different subjects treated in their chapters converge as particular manifestations of a single generic ideology shaped by contrasts in the national culture that gave rise to them and the era in which they were formed. A corollary of this point is that it would be a mistake to read this book simply as a contribution to the history of the Nordic extreme right. As a consequence of the vast collaborative effort that has enabled fascist studies to finally emerge as a serious, grown-up international and interdisciplinary field of studies, *Nordic Fascism* is not a parochial book of interest only to Scandinavians but contributes to the maturing of the specialism as a whole. I suggest that it does so in four respects.

First, it does not imply that Nordic Fascism is somehow peripheral to the epicentre of fascism, the regimes of Fascist and Nazi Axis. In 2011, Tomislav Dulić of Uppsala University organised the conference *Fascisms on the Periphery* which looked at different geographical areas (Nordic Countries, East-Central Europe, Baltic Countries, South-Eastern Europe, and the Balkans) as well as a generic theme (ideology and violence). The underlying message was the need to "mainstream" those fascisms which were still regarded as secondary or marginal, and hence less revealing of the nature of fascism than the movements of Mussolini and Hitler, and this book is further evidence of how far this argument has become orthodox.

Second, one of the recurrent themes of the present volume is the transnational aspects of fascism, something that could only be researched effectively once a consensus had emerged about what constitutes fascism and distinguishes it from other forms of right, and once each fascism was respected as a significant manifestation of the genus in its own right. This allowed historians to move beyond the fixation on the peculiar forms of ultranationalism and racism and revolutionary scheme adopted by individual movements and regimes as the core component of fascism. After all, since decadence was a feature of "the West" as a whole and not of individual countries, so solidarity with the fascists of other countries and bids to impose fascism on conquered territories through the medium of collaborationist governments was a natural extension of the mission to bring about national rebirth, not a dereliction of it, as were tactical alliances and collusions with fascisms in other countries. It was a sign that this shift in perspective was in the air that David Roberts' ground-breaking *Fascist Interactions* (2016) offered a radical critique of the myopia and nation-centrism of existing fascist studies and placed its transnational dimension high up on his agenda for the revitalisation of fascist studies.

Third, *Nordic Fascism* vindicates the argument made in Roberts' book for researchers to stop presenting fascism somehow as a pure ideology clearly demarcated from and remote from other forms of the radical right and traditional conservatisms and aloof from the democratic, religious, and capitalist institutions and social traditions into which they have to insert themselves.

In fact, one of fascism's fundamental traits, as Roberts pointed out, was and remains its pervasive tendency to become *entangled* with technically non-fascist phenomena, such as the monarchy, the Church, bourgeois values, national and Western culture, and to draw not only on science and pseudo-sciences such as demography, eugenics, and racial anthropology but also arguments from liberal humanism (such as the right to an identity) as part of its rationale. By headlining *entanglement* as an outstanding feature of fascism and stressing not just its advanced capacity for inter-fascist networking and alliances but promiscuity with non-fascist politics and social practice, *Nordic Fascism* shows how the recommendations made by Roberts are being instinctively put into practice with or without his direct influence.

The fourth feature of this volume to which I would like to draw attention is the fact that it contains essays on both interwar and post-war phenomena. Few of the classic monographs on generic fascism attempt to identify and explain the many transformations of post-war fascism and their continuities with its original interwar forms. Their accounts of fascism thus remain incomplete. They do not address how, while retaining indelible traces of interwar myths of palingenetic ultranationalism, post-war fascists could no longer promote their realisation by appealing overtly to biologically racist or patriotic notions of the national community which demonised entire categories of humanity, at least in their public persona (hard core neo-Nazis have no such scruples). Nor could they hope to mobilise a populist movement pursuing immediate national rebirth as the resolution of a pervasive state of crisis so had to adapt their message to postpone the racist revolution to future date. Hence Breivik entitled his "manifesto" *2083*, not *2013*.

For contemporary revolutionary ultranationalists, decadence is now manifested not in the palpable institutional breakdown of society but in the diffusion of such forces as globalisation, multiculturalism, mass migration, materialism, individualism, liberalised gender politics, and Islamisation. These conspire, fascists allege in their various guises and disguises, to bring about white genocide and destruction of the cultural habit needed to breed great visionary leaders and heroes prepared to fight for their racial purity (now euphemistically called "cultural difference" or "identity") through words and deeds. The few who remain are now condemned to act no longer as part of a world-historical movement but in small revolutionary cells or as lone wolves of the sort graphically described in William Pearce's disturbingly influential *The Turner Diaries* and *The Hunter*. It is thus gratifying to see that *Nordic Fascism* finds it self-evident that its contents straddle not just national boundaries but temporal ones, throwing into relief the deep continuities that connect the interwar and post-war fascist imagination.

I have taken up so much space in writing this foreword to ensure that the essays here are not just read for their intrinsic importance as case studies in Nordic fascism, but also as a symptom of the flowering of a discipline that is now genuinely thriving on the basis of a communal approach to fascism's core palingenetic dynamic which allows its transnational nature

and the complex web of entanglements with adjacent phenomena to be explored. Now we have *Nordic Fascism* and can look forward perhaps to comparative surveys of fascism and its radical right entanglements in other geopolitical areas.

Perhaps we may also look forward to a time when militant Islamists such as Al Qaeda and ISIS, nationalist populists such as Donald Trump and Narendra Modi, and totalitarian illiberal democrats such as Bashir al-Assad and Vladimir Putin are no longer lazily misclassified as fascist by ill-informed journalists and public intellectuals who should know better. The editors of the present volume are to be congratulated for the part they have played in the struggle to preserve the term fascism from inflation beyond its meaningful remit on the sound empirical basis that Allardyce lacked when he wrote his famous but inconsequential article. I am sure it will soon be reviewed and consulted beyond the mythic Nordic realm.

The Nature of Nordic Fascism

An Introduction

Nicola Karcher and Markus Lundström

Imagine a political group that struggles for territory bound to people of a presumed race or culture. It may be a sectarian and violent organisation, a provocative think tank, or an established party. Now picture this political group – deeply engaged in politics for racial and cultural homogeneity – in transnational dialogue with sister groups in other countries. What ideas and political convictions would they share? How might they inspire one another? What conflicts would be inevitable?

This book concerns the transnational facets of *Nordic fascism*. More precisely, it examines the nature of Nordic fascism as a historical constellation of radical-nationalist ideas and expressions in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland. The chapters are based on original research and present new findings – what we call fragments – of an entangled history of Nordic fascism. Let us begin with the starting points.

Starting Points

Transnational fascism has a centennial history in which ideas, practices, and networks have transcended national boundaries. In 1930, only a decade after the ideology was born in Italy, Benito Mussolini declared that "Fascism as an idea, a doctrine, a realization […] is Italian in its particular institutions, but it is universal in the spirit".[1] This idea prompted Mussolini to initiate a fascist international in the early 1930s,[2] tapping into an ongoing struggle for universal fascism that had been promoted by others years before.[3] During the interwar and war period, fascist ideas were frequently exchanged across national borders.[4] The interconnectedness, collaboration, and ideological co-production of fascist actors also endured after the Second World War,[5] continuing into the present day.[6] However, the nature of *Nordic fascism* – its presence, force, contradictions, and history – represents a significant research gap in contemporary fascism studies. In this book, we address that lacuna.

Our theoretical starting point is that Nordic fascism is located in a broader political landscape of *radical nationalism*, the political conviction that territorial belonging is based on either an unalterable race or an inherited

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culture – the very root of the nation. The adjective *radical*, stemming from the Latin noun *radix* (root), indicates that nationalism comes in different degrees – the politics of exclusion can be less or more radical – meaning that radical-nationalist groups can be right-wing as well as left-wing, overtly anti-democratic but also fully committed to the democratic rules of political engagement.[7] In this vein, we subscribe to Mattias Gardell's definition that radical nationalism is a "political landscape that encompasses a wide variety of overlapping and not infrequently competing political traditions".[8] The nations these groups seek to safeguard, Gardell continues, "are not necessarily the same as the nations of the actual existing nation-states".[9] This is emblematic, we argue in this book, of cross-border fascist collaboration in the Nordic countries.

We understand *fascism*, in the generic sense, as a specific constellation of the radical-nationalist landscape in the Nordic countries. While everyday language may typically use fascism as a pejorative term for unwarranted authoritarianism,[10] it should be noted that fascism is a political ideology in its own right. Fascism emerged in the 1910s, springing out of the 20th century clash between conservative, liberal, and socialist ideologies; it solidified during the interwar years and developed into, among a range of varieties, Hitler's National Socialism.[11] But fascism did not die after its defeat in 1945 – it recuperated, reconfigured, and re-emerged.[12]

In *The Nature of Fascism*, Roger Griffin's landmark study, generic fascism is defined as a "revolutionary form of nationalism".[13] Our anthology builds on this generic understanding of fascism as a struggle for a reborn racially/culturally homogenous nation, the resurrection of a paradise lost.[14] We thus define fascism as a revolutionary branch of radical nationalism that includes a plethora of historical and contemporary manifestations.[15] In this book, we demonstrate that some Nordic fascists submitted wholeheartedly to German National Socialism, while others were careful to differentiate themselves from Hitler's aggressive geopolitics. However, Nordic fascists have often shared a mythical belief in the exceptional *Nordicness* and *The North* as an idealised past and a desired future.[16] These ideas were advanced during the interwar and war period,[17] and they still have a central place in Nordic fascism.[18] Notions of Nordic supremacy are linked to a perceived threat of cultural annihilation and racial genocide, a devastating destruction of the Nordic race that would jeopardise civilisation itself.[19] In this sense, Nordic fascism not only draws upon but can also be distinct from Mussolini's Fascism and Hitler's National Socialism.[20] Before presenting the anthology chapters that dig more deeply into these ambiguities of Nordic fascism, let us first outline the rough historical contours of fascism in the Nordic countries.

Fascism in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland

Fascism in the Nordic countries crystallised in the aftermath of the First World War, with varied pace and intensity across localities. Whereas the Nordic region includes five nation states and three autonomous territories,

our anthology is focused on four countries where transnational networking and the exchange of ideas have been particularly notable: Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland. Although fascist parties never dominated the elected governments in any of these countries, fascist organisations have played an undeniable role in their political histories. These networks between fascist groups, spanning far across Northern Europe, also allowed fascism to survive its political bankruptcy after 1945. They continue to revitalise the various facets of Nordic fascism into the present day.

In Finland, the first generation of fascists emerged in the aftermath of the 1918 civil war between the socialist *Reds* and the anti-socialist *Whites*.[21] The civil war became a radicalising experience that led segments of the victorious Whites to envision a Finland freed from the political left.[22] They believed the Republic of Finland, declared in 1919 after two years of independence from Russia, was a far cry from the idea of an inwardly solid and outwardly strong nation, a Greater Finland encompassing the Finnish nationalities in a single polity within borders drawn by nature itself. This gave traction to the myth of a civil war left incomplete, fuelling dreams of a more comprehensive national rebirth.[23]

The struggle against the political left, the *enemy within*, was also a key feature of fascism in the other Nordic countries during the interwar years. In Norway, which gained independence from Sweden in 1905 and consolidated into a liberal democracy, radical nationalism and, ultimately, fascism grew out of the discontent of the economic crisis that followed the First World War.[24] The perceived risk of a socialist revolution spurred counter-revolutionary and paramilitary organisations that called for national unity against a contentious labour movement that allegedly jeopardised the newly established nation state.[25] Most notable was the Fatherland League [*Fedrelandslaget*], a counter-revolutionary organisation that at its peak had over 100,000 members. By the end of the decade, the growing labour movement and the establishment of a social democratic government in 1935, along with diminishing support from the conservative parties, drove activists to sympathise with the ideology of fascism.[26]

Fascism in Sweden was more potent and produced several political parties but failed to create a united movement. In 1924, Birger Furugård founded a political party that soon transformed into the Swedish National Socialist Farmers' and Workers' Party [*Svenska nationalsocialistiska bonde- och arbetarpartiet*], which, in 1931, consolidated with like-minded fascist groups to form the Swedish National Socialist Party [*Svenska nationalsocialistiska partiet*].[27] Due to ideological and personal conflicts, this fascist fusion split apart already in 1933, when Sven Olov Lindholm founded the National Socialist Workers' Party [*Nationalsocialistiska arbetarepartiet*, after 1938 *Svensk socialistisk samling*], which soon became the largest national socialist party in Sweden.[28] While Furugård's party and legacy emphasised a social conservative radical nationalism, the Lindholm movement forged linkages with German National Socialism.[29] Norway, too, saw, at the

beginning of the 1930s, an attempt to unite radical nationalists into a political party. Soon after Hitler seized power in 1933, Norway's former Minister of Defence, Vidkun Quisling, founded the party known as National Unity [*Nasjonal Samling*].[30] It was a fragile alliance of right-wing authoritarians, paternalistic Christians, and national socialists that never gained parliamentary representation and was soon reduced to a political sect.[31]

In Denmark, the inception of fascism followed Mussolini's coup d'état in 1922; small groups of self-identified fascists now began to target social democracy in general and the labour movement in particular.[32] Although few in number, groups such as the National Corps [*Nationalkorps*] received considerable media attention in the 1920s.[33] Later, following the steady success of German National Socialism, the Danish fascist Ejnar Vaaben formalised a national socialist organisation in 1928. Two years later, the Danish Boy Scout founder Cay Lembcke launched the Danish National Socialist Workers' Party [*Danmarks National-Socialistiske Arbejderparti*]. Between 1933 and 1943, it was led by Frits Clausen, who, through the 1939 national elections, gained himself and two fellow party members political seats in the Danish parliament.[34]

One of the strongest forces of radical nationalism in the Nordic countries during the interwar years was the Finnish Lapua Movement [*Lapuan Liike*]. In the early 1930s, it grew swiftly by uniting priests, industrialists, and former soldiers and sympathisers of the Whites from the Finnish Civil War.[35] The Lapua Movement lost its momentum after the Mäntsälä Rebellion's failed seizure of power in 1932. Some of its adherents began to self-identify as National Socialists after Hitler successfully seized state power in Germany. They heralded the fascist call for struggle against the communist *enemy within* and the national rebirth of a Greater Finland.[36]

The Second World War profoundly changed the landscape of Nordic fascism. Both Norway and Denmark were invaded by Germany in April 1940. In Norway, Hitler failed to set up a collaboration government with the democratically elected political elite and therefore assigned National Unity as a junior partner to the occupying regime in autumn 1940.[37] This unique arrangement made it the only legal party in the country. In 1942, Vidkun Quisling was allowed to establish his own puppet government, leading to the rapid growth of the party from just a few hundred to 43,000 members in 1943.[38] The Danish National Socialist Workers' Party did not, however, manage to gain a position similar to that of Norway's National Unity, because the Hitler regime succeeded in establishing a functioning collaboration government with the political elite in Denmark.[39] Finland allied itself with Germany from 1941 to 1944, partly to regain territorial losses to the Soviet Union in the preceding Winter War, but Hitler's government preferred to deal with Finnish political elites rather than the fractious network of Finnish national socialists. Later, however, Finland was obliged to fight Germany to fulfil the conditions of the 1944 Finnish-Soviet armistice.[40] Sweden was officially neutral in the Second World War, although Swedish authorities cooperated with Hitler by allowing troops to cross Sweden for the invasion of Norway.[41] Despite these contextual

differences, fascists in all Nordic countries actively recruited volunteers for the German military brigades of the Waffen-SS.[42]

The ultimate defeat of Hitler's Germany in 1945 brought down the occupation regimes in Norway and Denmark. It also made public adherence to fascism politically impossible. The movements now continued as renewed ideological formations, transnational networks, and political organisations. In Finland, fascist organisations were banned in 1944, in accordance with the Soviet-Finnish armistice terms, which forced activism to continue underground. This post-war organising was fuelled by close collaboration with Swedish fascists,[43] leading, in the early 1970s, to a Finnish branch of the Nordic Reich Party [*Nordiska rikspartiet*], a national socialist organisation established in Sweden in the 1950s, and to a fascist party led by the occultist Pekka Siitoin, which was banned by the Finnish government in 1977.[44] In Norway, treason trials were held against members of National Unity and other collaborators with the occupation regime.[45] The repression of fascist groups in Norway also led domestic actors to deepen their transnational networks, including an ideological exchange with the Swedish radical nationalist Per Engdahl and cooperation with the Nordic Reich Party.[46] Denmark also convicted Third Reich collaborators, and fascism remained unnoticeable until the 1970s, with the birth of Denmark's National Socialist Youth Movement [*Danmarks National-Socialistiske Ungdom*, from 1983 *Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Bevægelse*]. Even in Sweden, where fascist organising remained legal after the war, the once potent Lindholm movement diminished rapidly, and its political party was soon dissolved. The Nordic Reich Party then entered the political stage in 1956. Led by the national socialist Göran Assar Oredsson and later his wife Vera Oredsson (previously married to Lindholm), the Nordic Reich Party persisted in Sweden until 2009 as an intergenerational linkage between national socialist groups and a transnational platform for Nordic fascism.[47]

From the early 1970s onwards, the character of Nordic fascism gradually changed as a new generation of activists began to redefine the radical-nationalist landscape in the Nordic countries. In Sweden, this landscape became characterised by three currents of radical nationalism – social conservative, race-oriented, and identitarian – manifested as populist parties, overtly racist and violent movements, and meta-political think tanks.[48] The most notable manifestations of race-oriented radical nationalism were the Nordic Reich Party, White Aryan Resistance [*Vitt ariskt motstånd*], and, eventually, the Nordic Resistance Movement [*Nordiska motståndsrörelsen*].[49] Since its inception in Sweden in 1997, the Nordic Resistance Movement (called Swedish Resistance Movement until 2016) developed national chapters in other Nordic countries, building on previous pan-Nordic networking established through the fascist skinhead scene.[50] Although Finland banned the organisation in 2020,[51] it remains a prominent example of resurging Nordic fascism.[52]

Our claim, in this anthology, is that fascist violence, a menace haunting the Nordic countries into the present day,[53] must be situated in a history

of ideological cross-fertilisation between fascists in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, and beyond. With this book, we begin to uncover these fragments of an entangled history.

Fragments of an Entangled History

Akin to the disciplinary turn towards global history,[54] the basic assumption of *entangled history* is that nations alone are insufficient units of analysis, because they have been formed through long historical processes of interaction. The entangled history approach has, therefore, been increasingly used to study how political ideas and cultural phenomena develop across national boundaries.[55] In an endeavour to depart from methodological nationalism, we subscribe to the scholarly attempt to further entangled history and thus advance transnational fascism studies.[56] In line with Aristotle Kallis' claim that "our models of interpretations must accommodate alternative local interpretations, adaptations, and a wide range of varied outcomes in the process of their translation",[57] we use the entangled history approach to capture the interconnectedness and relationships between fascist ideas and networks across the Nordic countries. Through our international Network for Nordic Fascism Studies, NORFAS, we have begun collecting, organising, comparing, and analysing source material from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland. This anthology exhibits our initial findings.

The anthology spans fascism's centennial history in the Nordic countries, from its inception in the 1910s to the present day. It covers fascism's springtime of the interwar and war period, as well as its decline after the Second World War, a rupture that marks both discontinuation and continuation, renunciation and regeneration, of fascism's political ideas.[58] Whereas the self-identified fascist became something of an endangered political species after the fall of the Hitler regime in 1945, fascism, as an ideology, lived on and found new ways into the political mainstream.[59] The chapters of this book provide new empirical knowledge about the largely uncharted terrain of Nordic fascism. They concern Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland – and entanglements between different variants of fascism – including both well-known and fringe actors in the landscape of Nordic fascism.

In Chapter 2, Sofie Lene Bak and Terje Emberland, together with Heléne Lööw and Oula Silvennoinen, trace how antisemitism intertwined with the inception of fascism in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland. They reveal how antisemitism was not imported by fascist groups; rather, antisemitic conspiracism was a fertile soil in which fascism could grow. In Chapter 3, Nicola Karcher shows, through the organisation Norwegian National Socialists in Germany [*Norske Nasjonalsosialister i Tyskland*, NNST], how rivalry over the true nature of national socialism exhibits the difficulties involved in the venture of Nordic fascism. The convincement that their experience in Nazi Germany would naturally make them excellent candidates for cooperation

influenced the ambition of Norwegian National Socialists to build entangled networks with the Hitler regime and like-minded Nordic groups.

Whereas self-identification with national socialism was vital to some political organisations in the Nordic countries, other actors were more careful to dissociate themselves from organised fascism but still subscribed to fascist visions of national rebirth. In Chapter 4, Oula Silvennoinen shows how a self-identified non-fascist could still be tangential to fascist politics. Through a political biography of the Finnish businessman, politician, and public figure Ralph Erik Serlachius, Silvennoinen outlines how the idea of the communist *enemy within* guided Serlachius' political journey and produced occasional ideological or tactical alignments with Nordic fascism during the interwar and war years.

In Chapter 5, Claus Bundgård Christensen and Terje Emberland outline how overt fascist organisations in Denmark and Norway viewed Hitler's ambitions for the Third Reich with scepticism and fear. These concerns prompted some Norwegian and Danish fascists to elaborate their ideology in order to create an independent *Nordic* form of national socialism, similar to the way in which the Lindholm movement in Sweden sought a Nordic national socialist state independent from Hitler's Germany.

The esoteric aspects of Nordic fascism are detailed in Chapter 6, in which Gustaf Forsell outlines how fascists adopted a racialised variant of the myth of Atlantis, locating the supposed origin of the Nordic race in a mythical far-north continent in order to harmonise the features of a Nordic race and soul. In Chapter 7, Mattias Gardell traces the dark undercurrent of esoteric fascism by exploring traditions of Hitlerism in the political thought of Miguel Serrano and Savitri Devi, occult racist paganism, and the esoteric Nordic aspects of the extreme metal music scene.

In Chapter 8, Tommi Kotonen demonstrates how the issue of Finnishness in Nordic state building was pursued through the pan-Nordic networks of the Nordic Reich Party and how those entanglements, in turn, opened a window to Europe that allowed for novel fascist formations. In Chapter 9, Daniel Sallamaa and Leena Malkki show how the Nordic Resistance Movement's Finnish chapter negotiated ethnocultural ambiguities regarding Finnishness and the Finns in order to advance the organisation's vision of a pan-Nordic national socialist state.

Read together, the chapters of this anthology offer an initial mapping of the variegated terrain of Nordic fascism. While these are but fragments of an entangled history, we believe that our contribution deepens the historical understanding of transnational fascism in general and Nordic fascism in particular.

Notes

1 Mussolini's quote is translated and referred to in Kallis, "From CAUR to EUR," 361.
2 Hedinger, "Universal Fascism and its Global Legacy."

3 May, "Saving Our Empire from the Bolsheviks;" Bauerkämper and Rossolinski, *Fascism Without Borders*; Alcalde, "Transnational Origins of Italian Fascism."
4 Goodfellow, "Fascism as a Transnational Movement;" Oomen, "Youth of the 'New Europe';" Alcalde, "Towards Transnational Fascism;" Bernhard, "Blueprints of Totalitarianism;" Thompson, "The Propaganda of Universal Fascism."
5 Iordachi, "Fascism in Southeastern Europe;" Albanese and Hierro, *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century*; Ravelli, "Narratives of Neo-fascist Transnational Trajectories."
6 Jackson, "Dreaming of a National Socialist World;" Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*; Bland, "Global Fascism?"
7 Lundström and Poletti Lundström, "Hundra år av radikal nationalism;" Teitelbaum, *Lions of the North*, 8.
8 Gardell, *Lone Wolf Race Warriors and White Genocide*, 5.
9 Ibid., 6.
10 Griffin, *Fascism,* 6–7.
11 Payne, *A History of Fascism*, 23–24.
12 Ravelli, "Narratives of Neo-fascist Transnational Trajectories;" Albanese and Hierro, *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century.*
13 Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, xi.
14 Cf. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism;* Passmore, *Fascism*.
15 Gardell, *Lone Wolf Race Warriors and White Genocide*, 8.
16 Forsell, "Hidden Knowledge and Mythical Origins."
17 Lutzhöft, *Der Nordische Gedanke in Deutschland 1920–1940*; Karcher, "Schirmorganisation der Nordischen Bewegung."
18 Teitelbaum, *Lions of the North*; Malkki and Sallamaa, "Ethnocultural and Racial Ambiguities of National Socialist State-Building."
19 Karcher and Kjøstvedt, *Movements and Ideas of the Extreme Right in Europe*; Karcher, "Schirmorganisation der Nordischen Bewegung;" Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 1924–1979.*
20 Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung;" Emberland, *Da fascismen kom til Norge;* Christensen and Emberland, "Nordic Heretics;" Kunkeler, *Making Fascism in Sweden and the Netherlands.*
21 Silvennoinen, Roselius, and Tikka, *Svart gryning;* Ekberg, *Führerns trogna följeslagare.*
22 Silvennoinen, "Demokratins framgångshistoria?;" Silvennoinen, "Movements of the Radical Right in Finland."
23 Silvennoinen, Roselius, and Tikka, *Svart gryning.*
24 Dahl, *De store ideologienes tid*, 15–43, 189–225.
25 Gabrielsen, "Røde og hvite garder i Norge."
26 Larsen, "Conservatives and Fascists in the Nordic Countries;" Karcher, "Victor Mogens;" Blom, "Unge Høire;" Emberland, *Da fascismen kom til Norge*; Garau, "Anticipating Norwegian Fascism."
27 Lööw, *Hakkorset och Wasakärven;* Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen i Sverige 1920–1940*; Berggren, "Swedish Fascism."
28 Lundberg, *En idé större än döden*; Åmark, *Att bo granne med ondskan.*
29 Kunkeler, *Making fascism in Sweden and the Netherlands*; Lundström and Poletti Lundström, "Hundra år av radikal nationalism;" Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 1924–1979.*
30 Dahl, *En fører blir til*; Borgersrud, *Den norske militærfascismens historie 1930–1945*; Figueiredo, *Fri mann.*
31 Brevig and Figueiredo, *Den norske fascismen*; Danielsen and Larsen, *Fra idé til dom.*
32 Lundbak, "På sporet af en dansk fascisme;" Lauridsen, *Dansk nazisme 1930–45.*

33 Ravn, *Dansk nationalsocialistisk litteratur 1930–45.*
34 Bak, *Racismeparagraffen;* Christensen, *Følg Wilfred!*
35 Siltala, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset.*
36 Silvennoinen, Roselius, and Tikka, *Svart gryning.*
37 Skodin, *Okkupasjonsstyret i Norge;* Loock, *Quisling, Rosenberg und Terboven;* Dahl, *En fører for fall.*
38 Larsen, "Norwegian Fascism 1933–1945."
39 Poulsen, *Besættelsesmagten og de danske nazister.*
40 Kinnunen and Kivimäki, *Finland in World War II.*
41 Åmark, *Att bo granne med ondskan.*
42 Christensen, Smith, and Poulsen, "Germanic Volunteers from Northern Europe;" Westberg, *Waffen-SS;* Sørlie, *Solkors eller hakekors;* Swanström, *Hakaristin ritarit.*
43 Kotonen, *Politiikan juoksuhaudat;* Kotonen, "Window to Europe."
44 Kalliala, *Politiikkaa toisaalla;* Häkkinen and Iitti, *Valonkantajat;* Kotonen, *Politiikan juoksuhaudat.*
45 Dahl and Sørensen, *Et rettferdig oppgjør*?
46 Bangsund, *Arvtakerne;* Simonsen, "Antisemitism on the Norwegian Far-Right."
47 Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 1924–1979;* Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 1980–1999;* Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 2000–2014.*
48 Lundström and Poletti Lundström, "Hundra år av radikal nationalism."
49 Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 2000–2014;* Askanius, "Civil Discourse in the Online Media of the Nordic Resistance Movement."
50 Teitelbaum, *Lions of the North.*
51 Kotonen, "Proscribing the Nordic Resistance Movement in Finland."
52 Askanius, "Civil Discourse in the Online Media of the Nordic Resistance Movement."
53 Gardell, "Crusader Dreams;" Gardell, "Urban Terror;" Gardell, *Lone Wolf Race Warriors and White Genocide.*
54 Conrad, *What is global history;* Midell and Naumann, "Global History and the Spatial Turn."
55 See e.g., Ben-Canaan, Grüner, and Prodöhl, *Entangled Histories*; Kaiser et al., "An Entangled History of Postcolonial and Socialist Education;" Karlsson, Stenfeldt, and Zander, *The Entangled History of Communism and Nazism.*
56 Bauerkämper and Rossolinski, *Fascism Without Borders;* Griffin, *Fascism;* Iordachi, "From 'Generic' to "Real-Existing" Fascism."
57 Kallis, "The Transnational Co-production of Interwar 'Fascism'," 213.
58 Lundström and Poletti Lundström, "Radical-Nationalist Podcasting under a Postfascist Condition;" Wodak and Richardson, "European Fascism in Talk and Text;" Bar-On, *Where have all the Fascists Gone;* el-Ojeili, "Reflecting on Post-Fascism."
59 Kallis, "When Fascism Became Mainstream."

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1 Early Nordic Fascism and Antisemitic Conspiracism

Sofie Lene Bak and Terje Emberland with contributions from Heléne Lööw and Oula Silvennoinen

We have been told that antisemitism only became part of Italian Fascism as late as 1938, when Mussolini, under Nazi-German influence, introduced the Italian racial laws.[1] This line of argumentation has also been applied to other European fascist and proto-fascist movements. The historian Arnd Bauerkämper notes that, after 1933, a marked ideological radicalisation of right-wing authoritarian movements went hand in glove with a growing admiration for the Hitler regime. From Great Britain to Belgium, from the Netherlands to Norway, the attraction of Hitler's Germany led fascist organisations to adopt the antisemitism of German National Socialism: "The seemingly unbeatable Third Reich emerged as the dominant model, surpassing Italian Fascism, with the turn to antisemitism as a keynote of its growing attractiveness".[2] In line with Bauerkämper's argument, many Nordic historians also seem to conclude that antisemitism within Nordic fascism only became a prominent factor at a relatively late stage and as a result of the growing influence of the Nazi regime. In this chapter, we challenge that perspective.

The first programme of the Norwegian fascist party National Unity [*Nasjonal Samling*, NS], founded in 1933, does not mention the Jews and explicit antisemitism was not initially a prominent feature of the party's propaganda, which was mainly directed against the labour movement. This has led historians to surmise that the dominating ideology in the party at first was akin to Italian Fascism and that ideological antisemitism at this stage did not play a significant role.[3] In his biography of National Unity leader and collaborator Vidkun Quisling, historian Hans Fredrik Dahl writes that, even if Quisling and his followers gave vent to anti-Jewish prejudices early on, these were at this stage not of an ideological character, but corresponded to widespread anti-Jewish "cultural" prejudices of the day.[4] In contrast, the rising political antisemitism that National Unity was displaying by the mid-1930s was, according to Dahl, "a growing tendency to adopt German impulses".[5] However, this picture has been moderated by later research. Nordicist racialism – largely based on German writer Hans F.K. Günther's ideas of a Nordic *master-race*, which also implied the construction of a Jewish *Gegenrasse* – was already

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the core ideology in Quisling's first organisation, Nordic People's Rising [*Nordisk Folkereisning*], founded in 1931.[6] We shall later see that antisemitism was also an important, and even decisive, component in fascist parties that emerged prior to Quisling's party.

In research on Danish fascism, the pioneering historian Henning Poulsen concluded that antisemitism had long been an "embarrassing" issue for Danish fascists.[7] It was only with reluctance and for pragmatic reasons that antisemitism was introduced into Denmark's National Socialist Workers' Party [*Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Arbejderparti*, DNSAP] to make the movement fit the "German ideal". Moreover, Poulsen characterises the antisemitism of party leader Frits Clausen as abstract and grounded in conspiracy thinking, which to Poulsen, surprisingly, means that it was of minor importance.[8] For generations, just like their Norwegian counterparts, Danish historians accepted this picture.[9]

The particular chain of events that in October 1943 allowed the majority of the Danish Jews to escape to Sweden has played a decisive role in the historiographic understanding – both nationally and internationally – of the role of antisemitism in Denmark. The population's willingness to assist fleeing Jews has been perceived as evidence that antisemitism was something "un-Danish" and therefore alien to the national culture. For a long time, this perception hampered research into the persistence and various manifestations of anti-Jewish attitudes in Denmark and their relation to European trends. This patriotic narrative has also influenced the interpretation of the role of antisemitism within the various Danish National Socialist parties. It is mostly described as lukewarm and moderate, particularly in the largest party, the DNSAP.[10] In other words, Danish historical research, like its Norwegian counterpart, regarded antisemitism as something alien, and with respect to Danish National Socialism, as a late import from Germany.

However, in his extensive studies of Danish fascism, the historian John T. Lauridsen has shown that the term "moderate", with regard to the DNSAP's antisemitism, is grossly misleading since the party opposed all forms of racial mixing and believed in the superiority of the Nordic race and an ongoing racial war between the Nordic race and the Jews.[11] Simultaneously, Lauridsen points out, party leader Frits Clausen was aware of the fact that antisemitism and racial theories in general would not boost the DNSAP's popularity. Hence, in its public propaganda, the party usually toned down this aspect of its ideology.[12] Still, as this chapter will demonstrate, radical antisemitism persisted and materialised in competing National Socialist parties that later assisted in the German persecution of Jews during the war.

The pioneering Swedish historian of fascism Eric Wärenstam states that there, too, antisemitism was regarded as something alien and unsuited to Swedish conditions: "Antisemitism was – just like Nazism and Fascism – a wartime provision that could not be applied to Swedish society with any success".[13] Another Swedish historian, Heléne Lööw, has shown that, with respect to antisemitism, this is a debatable conclusion. Although the

Jewish community in Sweden never reached a significant size, the history of Swedish hostility towards the Jews goes back to the Middle Ages, and by the end of the 19th century, Nordic race mysticism and its implicit or explicit antisemitism were widespread and deep rooted in Swedish society. In 1889, the first Swedish antisemitic league was founded, later to be followed by several similar organisations. Among these, Barthold Lundéns Swedish Antisemitic Association [*Svenska Antisemitiska Föreningen*] played the leading role. As we shall see, it had already made contact in the early 1920s with German antisemites and National Socialists, and many of its activists were soon to join the ranks of the first Swedish National Socialist parties.[14]

Consequently, later research has come to see both Nordic racialist ideology, academically promoted by the Swedish State Institute for Racial Biology [*Statens institut för rasbiologi*], founded in 1922, as well as antisemitism as having a significant influence on early Swedish National Socialism. Still, the precise role that antisemitic activists played in establishing Swedish fascism, as well as the character of their beliefs, has remained a lacuna in fascism studies.

In Finland, the historiography of interwar Finnish fascist movements and antisemitism has been markedly influenced by Finland's position in Cold War geography. The end of the Second World War left Finland outside Western security arrangements and exposed to Soviet influence. In such circumstances, many aspects of Finnish-German cooperation during their common war against the Soviet Union in 1941–1944 were left unexplored by historians. As a result, there has been a marked tendency among scholars to treat antisemitism in general as an import and an element fundamentally alien to Finnish culture, even going as far as to declare that interwar Finland was a country in which antisemitism "simply did not exist".[15]

More commonly, antisemitism has been misattributed, belittled, or explained away. Consequently, even in studies of the interwar far right in Finland, antisemitism has also typically been considered a Nazi import. A parallel effect in far-right studies has been a general inability to understand the transnational and entangled pan-European and Western nature of these movements. Instead, Finnish scholars have too often tried to look at native fascist movements as separate from their continental brethren, as peculiarly Finnish inventions correctly understood only through the keyhole of national history.[16]

This chapter shows that antisemitism was no late occurrence within Nordic fascism, and it was not only a result of the growing influence of the new Hitler regime. Rather, we argue, antisemitic propagandists were among the earliest promoters of fascism in the Nordic countries and among the founders of the first movements, years before the Third Reich was established. Nevertheless, we will also show that many of these propagandists' relations to the fascist organisations they helped to launch soon became strained and, for some of them, rather short-lived.

In order to explain this somewhat surprising development, one must ask if their particular version of antisemitism was difficult to integrate into the political repertoire of the local fascist movements. We claim that some of the reasons for these tensions certainly can be found in their particular form of antisemitism. To the antisemitic advocates, the evil machinations of the Jews constituted the core of a whole belief system, which made it impossible to relegate "the fight against World Jewry" to a subordinate position within the wider scope of fascist politics. Antisemitism was their worldview, and this created a conflict related to an epistemological hierarchy: Was antisemitism just a subordinate part of an overarching fascist *Weltanschauung*, or was fascism merely a practical political tool for spreading an antisemitic worldview? Moreover, our presentation of these antisemitic pioneers in Nordic fascism will also show that the trouble they had marching in step with the fascist parties can also be found in their conspiracist worldview, which inclined believers to perceive themselves as elected prophets of an imminent apocalypse.

Which Antisemitism?

Prejudices about the Jews were common in the Nordic countries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and manifested themselves in negative stereotypes in popular culture and tropes in everyday language.[17] Rooted in traditional Christian anti-Judaism, some presented the Jews as something alien and threatening to national Christian culture.[18] Since the end of the 19th century, the Nordic countries had experienced rapid modernisation, entailing industrialisation, urbanisation, and internationalisation, and the emergence of new cultural and moral norms that challenged traditional ways of life. Many felt that this endangered the social order, with its long-established authorities and hierarchies. For some, it also challenged their personal positions as authoritative bearers of tradition.[19] The need to find a simple explanation for this perceived danger of societal disintegration led to the use of Jews, closely associated with modernity, as scapegoats. This hatred towards the Jews gave an identifiable object to the looming sense of *anomie* – of disorientation, chaos, and dissolution – and for some, they almost became synonymous with subversion, decline, and decadence.[20] In the Nordic countries, this kind of hostility was particularly widespread within the farmers' movements, where "the Jew" became the symbol of development, which was perceived to threaten traditional rural values and the farmers' social position.[21]

It comes as no surprise that Nordic fascists also displayed such forms of antisemitism. However, there was more to the antisemitism of these particular fascist entrepreneurs than such widespread variants of xenophobic and anti-modern hostility. It seems to have been connected to fantasies of an apocalyptic kind, which previous scholars have endeavoured to describe and delineate.

The medievalist Gavin I. Langmuir differentiates among various types of statements about Jews. He uses the expression *xenophobic hostility*, which is semantically linked to hostility towards foreigners (or, as the Greek origin suggests, against the *guest*), and describes negative perceptions of individuals generalised to comprise the whole group. Such prejudices are a response to a perceived social threat to the values, unity, and economy of a collective or an individual.[22] Thus, xenophobic antisemitism is an argumentative logic in which Jews in general are ascribed socially threatening behaviours.

Another, and in our context more important, type is what Langmuir calls "chimeric illusions". These ascribe to group behaviours and traits that have never been empirically observed in any member of the group. Consequently, these are pure products of imagination – like the fabulous *chimera* of Greek mythology – and have no connection to reality. They are

> fantasies, figments of the imagination, monsters that, although dressed syntactically in the clothes of real humans, have never been seen and are projections of mental processes unconnected with the real people of the outgroup.[23]

One such chimeric illusion is the notion that the Jews sacrifice Christian children during Pesach celebrations.[24] Another is that Jews from time immemorial, systematically, secretly, and under a common leadership, have worked to bring about the destruction of Christian civilisation and the establishment of their own world dominion. In other words, such fantasies depict the Jews as eternal sub-human enemies of civilisation.[25] In his seminal work *Europe's Inner Demons*, historian Norman Cohn has shown that such fantasies of satanic subversion are akin to the beliefs that motivated the persecution of Christian heretics and incited the European witch craze.[26]

It is precisely when statements about the Jews assume such a chimeric character that antisemitism becomes monomaniac, hallucinatory, and particularly virulent. Historian Christopher Browning points out that scholars have chosen different terms in trying to describe this phenomenon. However, he concludes: "About this notion that there is a kind of fantastic, hallucinatory, deeply obsessive antisemitism, I think all scholars would agree".[27] While Langmuir chooses the term "chimeric hostility", historian Saul Friedländer calls it "redemptive antisemitism". He points out that the hatred of Jews here takes on the form of a total worldview, according to which all forms of social malaise originate with the Jews. Consequently, the notion of a total, apocalyptic, and redemptive cleansing of society is necessary to prevent a total collapse.[28]

Langmuir denotes National Socialist as chimeric, but it is unclear whether it is the racial ideology per se, or more specifically the antisemitic conspiracy theories deeply rooted therein, that warrants this characterisation.[29]

Regardless, we claim that such chimeric fantasies are part of a mindset that entails more than just xenophobic hostility and biological racism directed towards the Jews. Friedländer states:

> Whereas ordinary racial antisemitism is one element within a wider racist worldview, in redemptive antisemitism the struggle against the Jews is the dominant aspect of a worldview in which other racist themes are but secondary appendages.[30]

What term shall we then use to describe this specific form of antisemitism that characterised some of Nordic fascism's early organisers? Is it possible to find an analytical approach that can explain both their role as fascist pioneers and, at the same time, their strained and sometimes tenuous relationship with the movements they co-founded?

Conspiracism

We claim that their antisemitism is part of a view of reality in which the whole world is governed by conspiracies. In the research on conspiracy theories, this is called *conspiracism* or *conspiracist ideation* and "refers to an underlying worldview or disposition, similar to political ideology, towards viewing events and circumstances as the product of conspiracies".[31] Political scientist Michael Barkun has summarised the traits of this thinking in the following creed: Nothing happens by accident. Nothing is as it seems. Everything is connected.[32]

Thus, this worldview is characterised by *intentionalism* since it leaves little room for coincidences or structural forces as explanations but interprets all undesirable developments as results of the conscious plans and secret schemes of evil actors. This thinking is also typically marked by an exaggerated and *illusional pattern-recognition* in which unrelated events and fragmented information are linked together and interpreted as secret omens of a conspiracy.[33] This worldview also entails a basic *distrust of epistemic authorities* because these are perceived as tools of the conspiracy seeking to hide the truth. Instead, one turns to other sources for belief verification. Barkun points out that a conspiracist worldview easily incorporates many forms of *stigmatised knowledge*, such as theories and claims that are not accepted by institutions that we normally seek out for truth validation.[34] Conspiracism is often accompanied by a notion of being initiated into deeper truths connected to *esoteric sources of wisdom*. The basic distrust of authorised knowledge leads conspiracy thinkers see any opposition to such esoteric, occult, and sub-cultural ideas as a verification of their validity.[35] The sociologist Ted Goertzel argued that conspiracy beliefs form part of a closed, self-referential *monological belief system* in which a conspiratorial idea serves as evidence for other conspiracist ideation.[36]

The terrorism researcher J.M. Berger emphasises that conspiracy theories are crisis narratives.[37] He refers to one element of this as "dystopic takeover", which means that the enemy has already taken over control of most of society. Thus, we are already on the brink of disaster, which requires immediate and radical action, an act of "redemption", to use Friedländer's terminology.

This mental universe often creates a feeling of being in possession of exclusive and hidden truths. People describe their conversion to conspiracy beliefs as an epiphany, a "conspiracy rush" in which the curtain is torn aside to reveal the puppet theatre of the world and its puppet masters.[38] In turn, this may further a grandiose and prophetic self-image.

In short, we claim that the antisemitism of these actors is part of a mindset that is not limited to the perception of the Jews as menacing aliens and racial inferiors.[39] Here, we offer *antisemitic conspiracism* as a possible analytical term in order to better circumscribe their mental universe.

Turning to the empirical material, we expect to find that the antisemitism of these particular actors is part of a conspiracist whole, a *monological* belief system. We may expect that the apocalyptic character of their thinking and notion of possessing a higher form of knowledge to induce the self-perception as prophets, and sometimes martyrs, of "The Truth". With such a self-image in mind, it would also be permissible to expect them to soon find themselves in conflict with the leadership of movements, which adhered to strict subordination under an autocratic leader.

The most important written manifestation of such an antisemitic conspiracist universe is the literary forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, first published in Russia in 1903 and soon constituting the main source for conspiracist ideation throughout Europe. The text purports to be the minutes of a late 19th-century meeting attended by world Jewish leaders, the "Elders of Zion", and claims to unveil a Jewish conspiracy aiming at the destruction of Christian civilisation and seizure of worldwide power.[40] *The Protocols'* vagueness is one key to its wide-ranging success. It is an "open text", which allows a dialectical interaction between text and reader, resulting in a variety of different interpretations and applications. The reader is presented with a hierarchy of conspirators, with the initiated Jewish elite at the pinnacle, and their various collaborators along a vertical commando line. Through its identification of the allies and lackeys involved in the conspiracy, the text can be read as anti-Masonic, anti-occult, anti-Liberal, and anti-Socialist. Basically, it is deeply anti-modern and offers an all-comprising "explanation of the perils of modernity as seen from the viewpoint of the ultraconservative and extreme right".[41] It is also distinctly dystopian in tenor, displaying an underlying religious-eschatological narrative.[42] Thus, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* has all the features to be perfect as the "sacred text" of a conspiracist worldview. Use of *The Protocols* will therefore serve as a strong indication of whether or not particular Nordic fascist pioneers did subscribe to such a worldview.[43]

Fascism and Antisemitism

The term *fascism* is used both to designate the specific Italian movement under Mussolini (written with an initial capital letter) and at the same time – such as in this book – used as a generic term (written with a lower-case initial letter) to describe a number of movements emerging in the interwar years and having "family resemblances" with respect to ideology, organisation, and political style.[44] Sometimes this creates conceptual confusion. When trying to determine if a movement is fascist in a generic sense, one should search for common traits inherent in the definition. Still, there is a tendency to use Italian Fascism as a comparative measuring stick, assessing the extent to which a movement displays traits typical of the Italian movement. This is probably part of the reason for the somewhat sketchy application of the pattern of development within Italian Fascism concerning racism and antisemitism to fascist movements in other parts of Europe.

Here, we define fascism in accordance with "the new consensus" in fascism research, which has been expanded upon by Nicola Karcher and Markus Lundström in the introduction to this book. It identifies fascism in all its different manifestations and historical permutations as centring on a basic myth of national rebirth (*palingenesis*).[45] This means that National Socialism – or to be more precise, the various national socialisms emerging throughout Europe in the interwar years and their subsequent transformations after the war – is also covered by this generic definition.[46]

Neither racism nor antisemitism are present in all fascist movements and are therefore not necessary requirements in a minimum definition. However, these phenomena are something more than arbitrary supplements since they are closely linked to the central myth of national rebirth. This myth is nurtured by the notions of *race*, and *nation*, as well as the *state*, frequently in combination, since these concepts are almost interchangeable within the fascist organic view of society.[47] Political scientist Mark Neocleous observes that "the state and race in fascism work alongside the idea of the nation, combining with the nation to link the individual to a higher, spiritual and universal force".[48] The untranslatable German noun *Volk* is a fitting example since it connotes all three aspects.[49]

In his examination of antisemitism within Europe's various fascist movements, historian Aristotle Kallis concludes that antisemitism does not appear in all of them, but in many. However, antisemitism is no product of fascism itself; rather, it constitutes an independent and much older phenomenon:

> When particular national permutations of fascism did embrace antisemitism, they were performing a standard ideological function of synthesis, inheriting a powerful psychological momentum shaped by a variety of other agents, both past and present. However, the particular way in which certain permutations of fascism embraced antisemitism did make a specific contribution to this momentum.[50]

Kallis claims that, by adopting antisemitism and integrating it into its populist mass communication, fascism not only achieved a powerful psychological momentum but also transformed conventional (xenophobic) antisemitic stereotypes and prejudices into "a single 'chimeric' assertion that was far more potent than the sum of its constituent parts".[51] This argument presupposes that fascists only adopted antisemitism into their political repertoire when it was so widespread and potent that it could afford them such a powerful momentum and, moreover, that it was not until it was incorporated into fascist politics that antisemitism assumed a chimeric character. We hold both claims disputable.

Gavin I. Langmuir also assumes that widespread social antagonism towards the Jews is the basis for the emergence and spread of chimeric fantasies.[52]Although the connection between antisemitism and the presence, attitudes, and status of *actual* Jews is complex depending on historical context, it is generally assumed that xenophobic antisemitism with political potential would require social tension associated with a Jewish minority. However, the very small and relatively inconspicuous Jewish populations in the Nordic countries caused few social frictions; by the mid-1930s, there were about 7,000 in Denmark and Sweden, 2,000 in Norway and 1,800 in Finland. Even so, antisemitic conspiracism certainly existed and was aggressively spread by a number of propagandists.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate that, even before fascism was introduced, Nordic antisemitic propagandists spread such chimeric fantasies as part of their antisemitic conspiracism. This may be explained by the fact that their hatred towards the Jews was not connected to negative everyday experiences with actual Jews. On the contrary, it was based on what Langmuir calls "figments of the imagination". Though specific Jews might have been utilised in their propaganda, these merely served as symbols. The conspiracist worldview was not a result of or affected by empirical realities. These propagandists were religiously devoted to the belief that the Jews, irrespective of their number and importance in Nordic societies, constituted an omnipresent, ominous power that was virtually invisible and of an almost transcendental character.

Norway

Apart from Vidkun Quisling, the leader of National Unity, there is hardly any individual who contributed more to the introduction of fascism in Norway than the architect and property owner Eugen Nielsen.

Nielsen's political career started in Norway's first self-proclaimed fascist movement, The National Legion [*Den Nasjonale Legion*], founded in May 1927 by the stockbroker and wholesale dealer Karl Meyer.[53] In the politically polarised atmosphere prevailing in Norway, Meyer's message initially resonated with some conservatives and members of the peasants' movement who feared economic collapse and socialist revolution. However, the

success was short-lived. After only a few months, in the autumn of 1927, the leader caused confusion in the ranks by letting the Legion run in the general elections, this in spite of having initially demanded the immediate abolition of party politics and representative democracy. This confusion turned into outright rebellion when the fascists only secured 1,200 votes and it was revealed that Meyer had embezzled party funds to use in his own shady financial dealings. Consequently, Meyer was forthwith dethroned and a working group, in which Nielsen assumed a leading role, was organised to salvage the Legion from total collapse. Hence, Eugen Nielsen entered the political stage as the most important early promoter of fascism in Norway and, at the same time, as the country's leading antisemitic propagandist.

After the disposal of Meyer, Nielsen spearheaded an ideological radicalisation of the Legion. In order to handle the cognitive dissonance created by electoral failure, Meyer's expulsion from the Legion and the subsequent desertion of many of its members, Nielsen turned to antisemitic conspiracy theories. It was "international Jewry", secretly supported by its lackeys in the Norwegian press and politics, that had thwarted their success, he claimed. At the same time, he oriented the organisation away from Mussolini-style Fascism towards the racial ideology of the German *Völkisch* Movement, with which he had become familiar during his visits to Germany as an architectural student. As a token of this development, he adopted the swastika – at that time used as a symbol by *völkisch* antisemites – as the Legion's insignia in the final months of its existence.

From here, the political path soon led him to the emerging National Socialist Movement in Germany. It was not Hitler who became Nielsen's main inspiration, however, but Erich Ludendorff. This general of the First World War fame had participated in Hitler's notorious Beer Hall Putsch in Munich in 1923 and was the foremost promoter of the *Dolchstoßlegende.* This conspiracy theory claimed that the German army was not defeated on the battlefields but had been stabbed in the back by unpatriotic forces at home.[54] In 1927, Ludendorff published the book *Vernichtung der Freimaurerei durch Enthüllung ihrer Geheimnisse* in which he identifies the traitors as "supranational forces" such as the Jews, Freemasons, Jesuits, and members of various occult societies. As soon as the book appeared, Nielsen obtained a copy.[55] Its disclosures made a great impression on Nielsen, something akin to a "conspiracy rush", and provided him with a new explanatory framework for his fascist and antisemitic beliefs. At the beginning of 1928, he contacted Ludendorff and was allowed to act as his Norwegian and international publisher.[56] Immediately afterwards, he established his publishing house *Antiforlaget*, devoted to publishing antisemitic, anti-Masonic, and anti-Catholic literature.[57]

After the dissolution of The National Legion in the spring of 1928, there was no organisation that fully shared Nielsen's newfound conspiracist views. While waiting, he sponsored *Ekstrabladet*, a right-wing radical and anti-Communist paper edited by the former socialist and labour organiser

Carl Lie. Under the influence of Nielsen and some of Lie's young supporters, the editorial line gradually became more openly antisemitic and pro-National Socialist.[58] After a period of intense propaganda and recruitment in *Ekstrabladet*, in October 1931, Nielsen sponsored the establishment of Norwegian People's Rising [*Norsk Folkereisning*] under Lie's leadership.

Besides Nielsen, two other prominent antisemitic agitators were to be found among Norwegian People's Rising's founding members, namely, the former theosophist, feminist, and lecturer Marta Steinsvik and the Christian preacher and engineer Albert Hiorth, the latter a supporter of Anglo-Israelism, a pseudo-historical idea that the British and Nordic peoples are descendants of the lost tribes of Israel.[59] Hiorth sponsored the first Norwegian translation of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and incorporated its conspiracist antisemitism into his religious preaching, while Steinsvik became the text's leading promoter. Her lectures on the Jewish world conspiracy, combined with her esoteric and anti-Catholic ideas, found a particularly attentive audience within the peasants' movements.[60]

Through these leading members, the programme of Norwegian People's Rising was heavily laden with antisemitic conspiracism. Although it warned against all immigration by "inferior races", almost all attention was devoted to the Jews, identified as the eternal foe of the Nordic race, representing a biological-hereditary "poison" that would turn Norwegians into "demoralised bastards". However, the threat was also of a spiritual nature, which emanated not only from the Jews per se, but also from anyone infested by the "Jewish spirit". The Freemasons were identified as one such particularly dangerous subversive element, but the leadership of the radical labour movement was also "infected" and consequently did the bidding of "World Jewry". The Jewish spiritual poison was also spread through modern cultural phenomena, such as "pornographic" literature, "Negro jazz", modern art and popular suspense books and films.[61]

Like Meyer's fascist Legion, Norwegian People's Rising was very short-lived. Almost immediately, conflicts arose between Nielsen on the one side and Steinsvik and Hiorth on the other. These were mainly linked to the role of Christianity. Even if they agreed on the demonic character of the Catholic Church in general and the Jesuits in particular, Hiorth and Steinsvik's anti-modern authoritarianism included the notion of a "national Christianity" headed by a paternalistic state church. Nielsen, on the other hand, had not only become a supporter of Erich Ludendorff's conspiracy theories but also a believer in the peculiar religious ideas of the general's wife, the psychiatrist Mathilde Ludendorff (born Spieβ). In her *völkisch*, neo-pagan religious philosophy called *Gotterkenntnis* (Recognition of God), all forms of Christianity were regarded as alien and Semitic and served only to keep the Nordic race in ignorance of its divine origin and inherent immortality.[62] These ideological differences led to the dissolution of Norwegian People's Rising almost before it started.

Soon afterwards, in 1932, Nielsen sponsored Lie's new organisation, Norway's National Socialist Party [*Norges Nasjonalsosialistiske Parti*], whose members were mainly recruited from high school and university students disillusioned by other right-wing activist organisations and radicalised under the influence of the rising Hitler movement in Germany. Shortly afterwards, Lie withdrew as *Führer* and the leadership passed on to a young National Socialist, Adolf Egeberg Jr. (see chapter by Christensen and Emberland in this volume). This organisation and its newspaper, *Fronten*, were again sponsored by Eugen Nielsen, who also accommodated the party headquarters in his office building in the working-class district of Grünerløkka in Oslo.

During the years from 1932 to 1935, this party – soon to become known as Norway's National Socialist Workers' Party [*Norges Nasjonalsosialistiske Arbeiderparti*, NNSAP] – experienced a certain level of success by recruiting a sizeable number of high school students. In the spring of 1933, some of its leaders were also involved in the foundation of Vidkun Quisling's National Unity. Afterwards, a number of NNSAP members joined National Unity and became its first core activists. Others regarded Quisling's attitude towards National Socialism and the racial question to be unclear, and therefore chose to remain outside the party. Still, both fractions of NNSAP members tried – from inside and outside National Unity – to instil Quisling's party with the spirit of National Socialism.

Eugen Nielsen, on the other hand, would absolutely not support National Unity. The party's stance on antisemitism was far too weak, something, he surmised, that was caused by the influence of the "artificial Jews" of the Masonic lodges. Soon, Nielsen's paranoid conspiracism also caused problems with the NNSAP, and by the end of 1933, he and the party went their separate ways. The reasons were both personal and ideological. The youngsters disliked his authoritarian style as self-proclaimed "party owner" and his use of the party's publication to spread his conspiracist and neo-pagan ideas. At a secret meeting on 15 December 1933, they decided to distance themselves from Nielsen and *Fronten*, moved their party headquarters and started a new magazine, *Nasjonalsosialisten*.

The first editorial in *Nasjonalsosialisten* stated that "*Fronten* has gradually been filled up with negative anti-Masonic and antisemitic themes instead of positive political ideas".[63] Obviously, this did not mean that NNSAP now rejected racism and antisemitism. Rather, the young activists' reaction to Nielsen's writings was due to strategic considerations. The communists and socialists were their main enemies and most important rivals in the high schools, where the NNSAP often constituted the main opposition. Therefore, they thought that Nielsen's fanatical, conspiracist antisemitism and anti-Masonry diverted attention from this main question. Moreover, and even worse, he had obviously set out to infuse Norwegian National Socialism with the ideas of the Ludendorff's.[64] His constant praise of Erich and Mathilde Ludendorff was eclipsing his tributes to Adolf Hitler and was

therefore to be considered outright political heresy, especially since tension was growing in Germany between the Führer and his old ally.[65]

Isolated from his former young compatriots, Nielsen's paranoid worldview was allowed to completely dominate *Fronten*, and the tenor of the articles grew increasingly apocalyptic and demonological – often underpinned by references to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a text that Nielsen fiercely defended against all accusations of forgery.[66] With each issue, new "sensational" information on the sinister manoeuvres of "the Jewish lackeys" within the Masonic lodges and their dreadful secret rituals were disclosed as proof of an omnipresent Jewish conspiracy. Nielsen's conspiracist mindset and quaint Ludendorffian beliefs also made him susceptible to all kinds of esoteric ideas, manifested in regular advertisements for clairvoyants, healers, and alternative medicine practitioners.

Due to this conspiracism – closely linked to a prophetic self-image and contrarian personality – Eugen Nielsen never obtained any position within fascist organisations in Norway. For the remainder of the 1930s and into the years of German occupation, he published *Fronten*, in which he continued a relentless crusade against Jews, Freemasons and Catholics, supported by a small circle of people who shared his worldview. He also cultivated contacts with the Ludendorff movement and others of like mind abroad, including Arnold Leese of the Imperial Fascist League in Britain and Elof Eriksson in Sweden.[67] During the occupation of Norway, the Security Service of the SS tasked Nielsen with registering the properties of the Masonic lodges, but apart from this, the German authorities did not assign this fascist and antisemitic pioneer any formal position. One reason might be that his vehement and continuous attacks on the "Freemason-infected" National Unity had made him much loathed amongst their Norwegian collaborationist partners.

Denmark

The first antisemitic organisation in Denmark was founded in May 1917 under the name Danish Association for the Restriction of Foreign Elements [*Dansk Forening til Fremmedelementernes Begrænsning*], in 1919 renamed the Danes' League [*Dansker-Ligaen*]. In spite of this nebulous designation, its sole purpose was to spread propaganda directed against Jews. Initially, support for the League was fuelled by a xenophobic climate caused by a combination of financial hardship, unemployment, and housing shortages in the aftermath of the First World War. However, the Danes' League was no ordinary xenophobic and racist lobby. Its focus was on promoting antisemitic conspiracy theories. According to the League, the Jews dominated Danish art, literature, journalism, and legislation and exerted damaging economic influence that threatened Denmark's autonomy. In order to attain world hegemony, the Jews had created a societal diversion, undermined patriotism and machinated the revolutions and wars that had devastated Europe.

The Danes' League was not only the first antisemitic political organisation in Denmark; it was also the first to promote conspiracist delusions of Jewish omnipotence. Through its journal, *Dansk Nationalt Tidsskrift*, published from 1919 to 1929, the organisation launched a propaganda offensive, which included public meetings and the distribution of pamphlets and books. Its first chairman was the architect Alfred Raadvad but it was the journal editor, the sculptor Rasmus Bøgebjerg, who most fervidly propagated the League's views in public.[68]

In its propaganda, the Danes' League played on traditional anti-Judaism and frequently used Martin Luther's diatribes against the Jews to maintain continuity with anti-Jewish theological discussions. However, *Dansk Nationalt Tidsskrift*'s rhetoric was explicitly racist and thus represented an extension of religious anti-Judaism. The League sought inspiration from German antisemitic literature, including Hans F. K. Günther and Theodor Fritsch, along with another antisemitic frontman, the American car manufacturer Henry Ford. The journal ran articles on the unfortunate results of "race-mixing" and featured a regular column in which persons of purported "pure or mixed" Jewish heritage were named and exposed. Although the organisation fused religious anti-Judaism, xenophobia, and anti-modern sentiments, its decidedly conspiracist outlook sets it apart from mainstream anti-Jewish prejudices. As early as June 1920, *Dansk Nationalt Tidsskrift* was quoting from the English version of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and in September of the same year, Rasmus Bøgebjerg instigated the translation and publishing of the first Danish edition.[69] To further promote *The Protocols*, Bøgebjerg collected antisemitic material later to be published in the book *Jødefaren: Bevismateriale*.

The following year, Bøgebjerg died and the teacher Hans Brunøe took over the leadership of the Danes' League. By then, Brunøe was already active in the proto-fascist association Revival Society [*Genrejserforeningen*] as well as its paramilitary wing, the National Corps [*Nationalkorpset*].[70]

Most of the early Danish groups and publications inspired by Italian Fascism did not have explicit antisemitism on the agenda. An exception was *Nationalt Blad*, which was distributed to members of the National Corps and to veterans from the Danish Baltic Auxiliary Corps.[71] This points to one important source of conspiracist antisemitism, namely, Russia and the Baltics. A telling case is another member of the National Corps, Max Arildskov, who, due to his early embracement of Italian Fascism, was nicknamed "Denmark's Mussolini". However, from the very beginning, his fascism was mixed with fanatical antisemitism, which he had picked up during his time as a volunteer in the Baltic wars of liberation.[72] Back home, Arildskov also tried to convert some of his former front comrades to his views by sending them copies of *Dansk Nationalt Tidsskrift*.[73] The historian Mikkel Kirkebæk concludes that conspiracist antisemitism was not only restricted to Arildskov, but also evident amongst other Danish volunteers in the Baltics, who, like Arildskov, afterwards joined the National Corps.

A substantial number of Brunøe's compatriots within the paramilitary, anti-Communist organisations that constituted the small and chaotic proto-fascist milieu in Denmark shared the views of the Danes' League.

The total number of the League members probably never exceeded 500, even if 1,000 copies of *Dansk Nationalt Tidsskrift* were sold every month. Still, its influence on public opinion was larger than membership figures might have warranted and extended beyond the small proto-fascist milieus. The national-conservative youth organisation Young Denmark [*Det Unge Danmark*], whose numbers included several later influential politicians, declared itself in agreement with the Danes' League's views and recommended reading of *Dansk Nationalt Tidsskrift*.[74] The League's first chairman, Alfred Raadvad, also wrote articles for the journal published by this organisation.[75]

Young conservatives were not the only ones to affiliate themselves with the Danes' League. Though it was a decidedly urban organisation, based in Copenhagen, leader Hans Brunøe was invited by agricultural organisations to give lectures in rural areas, most typically in Southern Jutland, which in 1920 had been reunited with the Kingdom of Denmark. Up until the mid-1930s, the largest Danish National Socialist party, the DNSAP, had its stronghold in the countryside, mainly in these newly reunified areas, where antisemitic rhetoric was an integral part of the agrarian protest movements and anti-Judaism thrived in conservative pietist religious milieus. In addition, Frits Clausen, who in 1933 became leader of the DNSAP, had received significant inspiration from the Danes' League after contact with it during his time as a medical student in Copenhagen.

After years of being ignored by the mainstream media in the capital, which would not publish its letters to the editors or advertisements for its meetings, and with post offices refusing to distribute its journal, the League lost its momentum and ceased most of its activities in 1926. It is nevertheless symbolic that the last issue of the *Dansk Nationalt Tidsskrift* came out in 1929, during the NSDAP's rally in Nuremberg, and included a tribute to Adolf Hitler.

By the early 1930s, when National Socialism had established itself in the political arena in Denmark, almost all the antisemitic pioneers of the Danes' League had died. The only prominent League member to join the emerging Danish National Socialist Movement was Hans Brunøe, first as a contributor to the DNSAP's publication, *National-Socialisten*, and in 1935, by joining the party. With his background in antisemitic activism and the proto-fascist organisations of the 1920s and later through his membership of the DNSAP, "Brunøe belongs to the exclusive group of forerunners of Danish Nazism, who inspired the next generation", historian John T. Lauridsen concludes.[76]

Danish National Socialism was not limited to the DNSAP, however. Due to conflicts over leadership and ideology, various other parties emerged (see Bundgård Christensen and Emberland in this volume), and these oppositional National Socialists held the antisemitic pioneers of the League in particular reverence.

This is certainly the case with translator Aage H. Andersen's Denmark's National Socialist Workers Party [*Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Arbejderparti*, NSAP] founded in October 1935. This party was established as a direct result of Andersen being excluded from the DNSAP on the grounds of his "extreme opinions".[77] One of the triggering causes for his exclusion was the pamphlet *Den kristne Kirke i nordisk Belysning*, which Andersen had published the same year, and which to a large extent was based on *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.[78] The pamphlet stirred quite an uproar in the mainstream press, which unanimously protested against this kind of racist smear and ridiculed the use of a text that had already in the early 1920s been exposed as a fake. The leaders of the DNSAP regarded this as detrimental to the reputation of the party, which at that time was trying to attract more voters by downplaying its antisemitism. Shortly thereafter, the DNSAP issued a decree distancing itself from Andersen's views and forbade members to sell or distribute his pamphlet.

As supreme leader in his own party, Andersen could let the conspiracism of *The Protocols* play a principal role in its propaganda, and issued the complete text both in 1940 and 1941.[79] In the party's mission statement, National Socialism was made synonymous with antisemitism: "There is only one salvation, and that is National Socialism, to each and every point aimed at combatting the sinister and arrogant Jewish conquest of the World".[80] Under slogans such as "Denmark for the Danes", "No peace on Earth as long as just one Jew is alive" and "The Jew is the cancer of our society", he began publishing the weekly journal *Kamptegnet*, a Danish version of Julius Streicher's *Der Stürmer*.

Within the NSAP, the antisemitic predecessors in the Danes' League were awarded status as *alte Kämpfer* and their publications reissued. The League's existence gave legitimacy to the NSAP's claim that core ideas in its ideology were home-grown and not imported from Germany, since this League predated the German National Socialist Movement. Thus, the Danes' League and its views represented a continuity both with regards to rhetoric and worldview.[81] The conspiracist worldview that Andersen inherited from the League may explain why historiography has labelled the DNSAP's antisemitism as "moderate", yet it makes no sense to do so. It merely obscures the fact that the DNSAP recommended that the "Jewish Problem" be solved by segregation and emigration. The reasons behind the break with Andersen were primarily tactical, made all the more evident by the fact that the NSAP and DNSAP merged in 1941, during the German occupation. Thus, the ideological differences were not serious enough to stop the parties from joint efforts at a time when both were supported by the occupation forces, nor from utilising the prevailing opportunistic mood in larger segments of the population to swell membership.

However, the most fanatical core of the NSAP carried on its antisemitic activity within the association Danish anti-Jewish League [*Dansk Antijødisk Liga*], organised the same year as a sub-section of the National

Socialist organisation Anti-Jewish World League [*Antijüdische Welt-Liga*].[82] Choosing the symbol of a dagger engraved with "Denmark contra jvdæos", the Anti-Jewish League sought to rally all antisemitic forces in a struggle for survival: "Judaism and Communism have organised a battle that will doom our people and bring victory to Judaism – so Danes must now organise to illuminate these World-destructive forces to protect our people from annihilation".[83]

Both the NSAP and the Danish Anti-Jewish League were more radical in their all-consuming hatred of the Jews than many other political antisemites. This is evident in their extremely vulgar rhetoric and in their recommended solutions to the "Jewish Problem". Here, they not only adopted German National Socialist tropes like "annihilation", but also accepted sterilisation, internment, ghettoisation, forced labour and even killing as legitimate methods.

United by the conspiracist delusions, the core members of the Danish Anti-Jewish League shared the experience of an epiphany, a "conspiracy rush", which turned them against former lives and values. A prominent member of the NSAP and the Danish Anti-Jewish League, the admired author Olga Eggers, may serve as an example. She had first joined the DNSAP in 1934, but soon left the party and joined forces with Andersen in 1938. As with Andersen, her all-consuming interest was the *Jewish question*. In the light of her longstanding commitment to Social Democracy and the feminist cause, her sudden conversion to antisemitism appears as something of a paradox. However, it might be explained by the experience of an epiphany, a "conspiracy rush", which revealed to her "the hidden truth". Her newfound belief immediately made her the object of public scorn and ridicule, something that seems only to have strengthened her resolve and radicalised her ideas.[84]

This uncompromising and contrarian attitude appears to have been common amongst activists in the NSAP, which brought them into constant conflict with their surroundings and even with fellow members of their organisation. The NSAP was in perpetual turmoil and crisis. Its members were always quarrelling, and frequently some protested against Andersen's "dictatorial tendencies". The *Führer* himself was therefore on perpetual guard against internal gossip, fractions, and conspiracies and felt repeatedly forced to exclude members who did not display sufficient confidence in his leadership.[85]

The antisemitic worldview propagated by the NSAP, and later by the Danish Anti-Jewish League, was total and uncompromising, and it came at considerable personal cost. In 1940, Andersen's wife left him, explaining:

> You know my feelings toward this form of outré propaganda, which, I believe, is unworthy of an honest and righteous man. Isn't it enough to let facts speak for themselves? Fabricating crimes will have the opposite effect of what is intended.[86]

His conspiracist antisemitism had come between them, and in 1943 they divorced. From then on, Aage H. Andersen stood alone, isolated from kith and kin but free to continue his paranoid crusade.[87]

The forerunners and pioneers of Danish fascism mentioned here were all deeply immersed in a conspiracist form of antisemitism predominantly inspired by *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This might serve to explain why their political success was so limited. In the 1920s, racism and xenophobia were no barrier to acceptance in conservative and agrarian milieus, yet conspiracism was. This may also explain why, by the 1930s, some had fierce problems finding a place within the major DNSAP, where racism was definitely not an obstacle. For people like Hans Brunøe, Aage H. Andersen and Olga Eggers, antisemitism was not only their political project, but also their worldview. Fascism, also in its National Socialist variety, was merely a potentially convenient political platform from which to spread their apocalyptic message. Their use of pre-National Socialist sources, such as the Danes' League, demonstrates that they did not need National Socialism – just as it explains why their views survived it. [88]

Sweden

The origins of both Swedish National Socialist parties, Birger Furugård's Swedish National Socialist Party [*Svenska nationalsocialistiska partiet*] and Sven Olov Lindholm's National Socialist Workers' Party [*Svensk socialistisk samling*], can be traced back to milieus around two antisemitic publications.

Between 1919 and 1931, the engineer and musician Barthold Lundén edited the yellow press weekly *Vidi*, published in Gothenburg. This journal frequently attacked Jews and homosexuals and even headed a campaign to support the Zionist Movement in order to facilitate an exodus of the "parasitic" Jews from Sweden. Between 1902 and 1909, Lundén studied music in Berlin and had become a passionate Wagnerian, a likely early source of his antisemitic views.[89] His close connection to Germany made *Vidi* one of Sweden's strongest supporters of Germany during the First World War, and in the autumn of 1923, it had already introduced Adolf Hitler as the new German Messiah.[90] However, the antisemitic impulses also came from the East, since *Vidi* also was the first Swedish publication to present *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.[91]

In 1923, Lundén founded the Swedish Antisemitic Society [*Svenska Antisemitiska Föreningen*], the organisational symbol of which was the swastika. At its highpoint, the Society had about 1,500 members, published regular periodicals and pamphlets – including writings by Theodor Fritsch and Henry Ford – and organised lectures and social events.[92] Historian Lena Berggren characterises the society's antisemitism as clearly conspiracist:

> The conspiracy myth that the Jews strive to achieve world hegemony and use of them as scapegoats are both persistent themes, probably boosted by the influential antisemitic text *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.[93]

The membership of the Swedish Antisemitic Society came from the strongly nationalistic segments of the middle class.[94] Moreover, it could pride itself on having Hermann Göring – at the time living in Sweden – among its members. Not surprisingly, several members were soon to be found in leading positions within the Swedish fascist movement, such as the brothers Sigurd, Birger, and Gunnar Furugård from Värmland.[95] Sigurd was particularly active and held for some time the position of the Society's secretary. During the First World War and the October Revolution, he had been to Russia and the Baltic states, experiences that had made him both a staunch anti-Communist and a fierce antisemite, views that were further strengthened by the reading of works by Huston Stewart Chamberlain and Theodor Fritsch.[96]

In 1923, he and his two brothers, Birger and Gunnar, were already acquainted with German National Socialism, initially through contact with Dietrich Eckhart, the editor of *Völkischer Beobachter*, and meetings with Hans F.K. Günther, who at that time was living in Sweden. In the autumn of that year – barely a month before Hitler's failed Beer Hall Putsch – Sigurd and Gunnar visited the NSDAP's headquarters in Munich. During this stay, they also had a meeting with Erich Ludendorff, discussing "the Jewish Question".[97]

Back in Sweden, Sigurd Furugård suggested that the Antisemitic Society should be turned into a political party. However, this met with disapproval from Lundén, who was of the opinion that it ought to make room for all true antisemites, regardless of political persuasion. For his part, Sigurd Furugård thought that Lundén focussed too narrowly on the Jewish question.[98] In 1924, this led him and his brothers to form the Swedish National Socialist Freedom Association [*Svenska Nationalsocialistiska Frihetsförbundet*] with Sigurd as editor of the party's periodical, *Nationalsocialisten*. Through fusion with other minor National Socialist groups, this organisation developed into what became the Swedish National Socialist Party [*Svenska Nationalsocialistiska Partiet*], with Birger Furugård as leader.[99] The brothers' background in organised antisemitism made the "fight against the Jewish menace" a prominent part of their party's programme.

Lundén's motto was "only alone are you strong", and his pompous personality and singular obsession with the Jews led him to prefer standing outside the party. His inability and lack of willingness to subordinate himself to any organisation in which he was not the sovereign leader also became evident in his conflict with Gottfrid Mortens, the editor of the tabloid *Blixten* in Malmö. Initially, Mortens had tried to form a local chapter of Lundén's Society, but after a conflict over leadership, he founded an independent antisemitic association called the Swede Organisation [*Organisationen svenske*].[100] Nonetheless, the historian Eric Wärenstam concludes that Lundén undoubtedly "in his own way and within circles where he had influence, created fertile ground for National Socialism in Göteborg".[101]

Elof Eriksson started his career in 1914 by heading a reactionary, anti-modernist, and antisemitic fraction within the Swedish peasants' movement. In 1924, he founded the paper *Nationen*, which was almost wholly devoted to antisemitic and anti-Masonic propaganda.[102] Closely linked to this paper, Eriksson ran a publishing house disseminating his own books and pamphlets, but also translations of antisemitic writers like Theodor Fritsch and Erich Ludendorff.[103] To Eriksson, the writings of Ludendorff, and the subsequent personal contact with the general, were most important. Through this, he became aware of "the true nature of the supranational powers, concealed to most people, and the game that was played behind the pleasing façade of modern democracy".[104] In her biography, Lena Berggren characterises Eriksson's antisemitism as something more than antisemitic xenophobia. In his worldview, she points out, the Jews constituted a powerful and resourceful demonic foe of the Germanic race, with whom they have fought for world domination since time immemorial. Eriksson was thus marked by a conspiracist mindset, and "the intensity of his belief in this conspiracy increased as antisemitism became more central to Eriksson's worldview".[105]

In 1928, a group of military men in Stockholm affiliated with *Nationen* created Sweden's Fascist Combat Organisation [*Sveriges Facistiska Kamporganisation*], which took its main inspiration from Italian Fascism. Nevertheless, conspiracist antisemitism was also here, mainly due to the influence of Eriksson, who featured prominently right from the start.

After having encountered the fascists' propaganda car in the streets of Stockholm, the young officer Sven Olov Lindholm became a member. He soon sought out Elof Eriksson, and during their conversation the editor explained that the primary objective of the fascist movement was to combat the rule of plutocrats and the power of Jews and Freemasons. As an introduction to this battle, he also lent Lindholm a Swedish translation of Henry Ford's *The International Jew*.[106] This clearly indicates that Eriksson regarded the fascist organisation primarily as a tool for transforming conspiracist antisemitism into party politics. In this, he probably was supported by the leader of the organisation, Konrad Hallgren, who as a volunteer had fought on the Eastern Front during the First World War and subsequently joined General Baron Peter Wrangel's "black army", which continued the battle against the Bolsheviks until 1924.[107] Antisemitism inspired by *The Protocols* was a basic feature of the army's ideology and was utilised in its propaganda against the Bolshevik regime.[108] The historian Håkan Blomqvist notes that a Finnish-Swedish edition of a book by Baron Wrangel (the father of Peter), *Från livegenskap till bolsjevism*, contributed greatly in disseminating the myth of the "Jewish Bolshevik" in both Finland and Sweden.[109]

At the beginning, *Nationen* served as the mouthpiece of the fascist movement, but when Hallgren, as leader of the organisation, demanded to take over editorial responsibility, Eriksson and the organisation parted ways, and the fascists set up their own journal, *Spøknippet*.

At the same time, Sweden's Fascist Combat Organisation oriented itself more towards German National Socialism after Lindholm and Hallgren had visited the Hitler movement. Consequently, in 1929, their organisation changed its name to the National Socialist People's Party [*Nationalsocialistiska Folkpartiet*].[110] The following year, this party was swallowed up by Furugård's movement. However, in 1933, Lindholm broke away and founded what was later to be called Swedish Socialist Unity [*Svensk socialistisk samling*], which became the dominant National Socialist Movement throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

Having severed his ties with the fascists, Elof Eriksson was left alone to pursue his conspiracist ideas. Like Eugen Nielsen in Norway, he now sought out his fellow believers abroad, and corresponded extensively with antisemitic propagandists in Germany and the Nordic countries.[111] Wärenstam concludes that Eriksson's comprehensive correspondence indicates that he often felt lonely and deserted his struggle against the Jews and Freemasons.[112]

"It is interesting that Eriksson's extreme antisemitism never really resonated with the Swedish National Socialists", Heléne Lööw notes.[113] Lena Berggren points out that the conflicts between Eriksson and the National Socialist parties were not, as they claimed, due to his antisemitism being too narrow or vulgar, but because it constituted an ideology that, on several counts, came into conflict with National Socialism.[114] One might say that his antisemitic conspiracism came into conflict with fascism's own claim to constitute such an overarching worldview.

Berggren also notes that this form of dogmatic sectarianism did not only characterise Eriksson. Other antisemitic activists also stood outside the fascist parties.[115] Such was the case with Einar Åberg, the founder of Sweden's Anti-Jewish Combat Union [*Sveriges Antijudiska Kampförbund*] in 1941. He is particularly interesting because his activities went on for such a prolonged period. He first became an antisemitic activist in 1922, after having read *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which he later published. After that, he started disseminating antisemitic leaflets and booklets to government authorities and selected individuals and through the 1930s managed to distribute tens of thousands of such publications.[116]

Åberg frequented the meetings of several fascist and antisemitic organisations but, typically, never became a member. Instead, he preferred to nurture international contacts, among these German antisemitic publishers and fellow Danish and Norwegian antisemites. In 1941, Åberg opened a bookshop in Stockholm selling antisemitic literature, and in November of that year he founded Sweden's Anti-Jewish Combat Union. Åberg's bookshop immediately drew negative attention and his vulgar propaganda got him involved in a number of court cases, in which he several times was sentenced for conduct unbecoming. Although his organisation ceased its activities at the end of the war, Åberg continued to spread his antisemitic propaganda by reprinting and disseminating his antisemitic leaflets and brochures. These were also translated into several languages and, over time, found their way to almost all countries in the world.[117]

Finland

The 1920s proved to be a fruitful era for developing the organisational base of Finnish fascism. The decade culminated in the formation of the Lapua Movement [*Lapuan Liike*] in 1930, but the organisational foundations were laid well ahead. The ideological core was that of a White Finland – an authoritarian, nationalist, and hierarchically organised state – an idea nurtured among the most radical of the 1918 Finnish Civil War Whites. A number of right-wing organisations founded in the 1920s carried this theme forwards and developed it further.

Even before the end of the Civil War in 1918, the radical nationalist scene had begun its self-organising process, culminating in the creation of the first expressly fascist Finnish organisations and, ultimately, in the Lapua Movement. While the early preachers of Finnish fascism were not overtly antisemitic, the new wave of 1920s radical far-right organisations, with their new strands of antisemitic conspiracism, is easier to discern.

Antisemitism as such needed no introduction from abroad. The antisemitism endemic among the Finns was of the same root as everywhere in the Christian West. Late-19th- and early-20th-centuries public debates on Jewish citizenship rights in Finland had once more underscored its presence and spread. Such anti-modern, anti-Judaistic and xenophobic layers of antisemitism were further developed through innovations in Russian antisemitism during the late Imperial period, particularly through the publication and distribution of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

The Bolshevik coup in 1917 formed a threshold with regards to antisemitism's connection to Russophobia. Ideas of the prominent role of Russian Jews in the Bolshevik Movement crossed easily from White Russian propaganda to receptive minds in Finland. Already in early 1920, the chief of the newly established Finnish Security Police, Ossi Holmström, was advising his personnel on how to proceed with travellers coming from Russia: "One must be very much on one's guard, particularly with the Jews, for according to the received information, at least 80 percent of all Bolshevik leaders are thought to be Jews".[118]

The security police in general is here an informative point of comparison because its personnel was entirely made up of non-socialists who had attached themselves to the White cause yet were not extremists. Around the mid-1920s, those taken into custody by the Sortavala branch of the security police could pass their time in the cells with selected literature provided by the security police, including the Finnish translations of either *The Protocols*, Henry Ford's *The International Jew* or Jérôme and Jean Tharaud's *Quand Israël est Roi*.[119] A major influence later in the decade was Erich Ludendorff's *Vernichtung der Freimaurerei durch Enthüllung ihrer Geheimnisse*, published in 1927. While the book received no Finnish translation, it was eagerly read in the original language among, for instance, the upper echelons of Evangelical Lutheran clergy. Ludendorff's fantasies of

a Jewish-Masonic conspiracy as the cause of Germany's defeat were not entirely new for Finnish readers because Ludendorff's *Kriegserinnerungen*, in which he had already developed the conspiracy theme, had been immediately given a Finnish translation in 1919.[120]

Thus, by the late 1920s, the forms of antisemitism encountered among the Finns would have been indistinguishable from its conspiracist forms elsewhere in Europe. Finnish antisemitism displayed the same supranational features and beliefs. War, the collapse of empires and violent domestic upheaval were a background against which it was easy to see everywhere the hand of Jews and Freemasons, working through both Bolshevism and finance capitalism, to bring about the collapse of civilisations and the fall of the Christian West.

The final years of the 1920s were characterised by a halting process of mobilisation to bring about a Finnish far-right movement with countrywide reach and mass support. There were several false starts and local attempts at nationwide movements that never got off the local stage, before the Lapua Movement swept to success in late 1929 and early 1930.

One of the pioneer organisations, the Viitasaari Patriotic Club [*Viitasaaren Isänmaallinen Kerho*], also known as Patriotic Citizens of Viitasaari [*Viitasaaren Isänmaalliset Kansalaiset*], was founded in 1929 in Viitasaari as a local ancillary to the nascent Lapua Movement. However, the Club also displayed accentuated forms of antisemitism, which early on caused friction with the mainstream of Lapua activists.

Geographically, Viitasaari was definitely peripheral. The founding members of the Club – a municipal physician, a pharmacist, and a few notable farmers – were exactly what could be expected in such a parochial setting. Ideologically, however, the leading lights of the Club represented the cutting edge of continental conspiracist antisemitism, and the Club was the first to take up the struggle against Jews and Freemasons as public parts of its programme. The Viitasaari Patriotic Club brought together three remarkable personalities highlighting the strands of antisemitism present among the Finnish far right: The Finnish *Jäger* and *Freikorps* veterans Gunnar von Hertzen and Gunnar Lindqvist, and the Evangelical Lutheran minister Matti Jaakkola.[121]

Gunnar von Hertzen had a solid background as an independence activist and a soldier. Born in 1893, Hertzen gained his military training in Germany, in the ranks of *Jägerbataillon 27*, set up by Finnish volunteers in preparation for a German-assisted uprising in Finland. Eventually, the battalion participated in the Finnish Civil War on the White side. Hertzen went on to earn the rank of major. After the Civil War, he planned and led an ill-fated Finnish *Freikorps* expedition to Russian Karelia in the spring and summer of 1919. After the last flickers of intervention and uprising in what had become Soviet Karelia died down in 1922, Hertzen took up studies in medicine in Helsinki. A member of the ultra-nationalist Academic Karelia Society in his student days, by 1927 Hertzen had earned his decree

and in 1931 settled down as a municipal physician in Pihtipudas, a central Finland parish neighbouring Viitasaari.[122]

Gunnar Lindqvist shared a similar background. Born in 1898, he had joined the *Jägerbataillon* in 1915. His tour of duty later brought him to the Estonian War of Independence with the Finnish *Freikorps*, from which he drifted into the ranks of Rüdiger von der Goltz's *Eiserne Division* intervening in the Latvian War of Independence, ultimately becoming a part of the White Russian Southwestern Army under the notorious Prince Bermondt-Avalov. Demobilised in Stettin in 1919 with the *Eiserne Division*, Lindqvist stayed in Germany until 1927 as a sales representative, acquainted himself with National Socialism and apparently joined the SA.[123]

What may have been more important was that Lindqvist had a solid family background in antisemitism. In 1919, his father, Rafael Lindqvist, a novelist and publisher, published the first Finnish edition of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, in Swedish, translated from German. Throughout the 1930s, Gunnar Lindqvist went on to act as the editor of *För Frihet och Rätt*, a monthly journal whose agenda was dominated by a defence of the rights of Swedish-speaking Finns, as well as by antisemitic and anti-Masonic propaganda. The journal had its roots in the Swedish-speaking members of Finland's People's Organisation [*Finlands Folkorganisation*], itself an openly fascist organisation, which had as its symbol an azure swastika on a white field in its otherwise blood-red flag.[124]

While Hertzen and Lindqvist both belonged solidly to the Finnish war generation, the third central member of the Club, the Lutheran minister Matti Jaakkola, was a different case. Born in 1879, his prominent and public antisemitism made him conspicuous among the Finnish clergy. His career as an antisemitic polemicist had begun in the early 1920s, and in the founding meeting of the Viitasaari Patriotic Club in December 1929, he delivered a speech singling out the Jews as arbiters of the First World War and Germany's defeat. The plethora of claims and material Jaakkola marshalled to support his case makes it clear that he had been studying the topic for some time. Indeed, there is evidence that Jaakkola's interest in the part played by the Jews in world history was present already in the early 1920s.[125]

Jaakkola's presentation was picked up and published by local newspapers, and by the end of 1930, the Club had begun publishing its own range of pamphlets. Penned by Jaakkola, they were not only anchored in traditional Christian anti-Judaism, but also displayed the newest trends within contemporary continental European antisemitism. At the same time, Club members sought to assert their influence in the nascent Lapua Movement. In March 1930, Hertzen and Jaakkola both participated in the second Lapua meeting, which would lead to the establishment of the movement proper. Both took the floor to warn the participants of the danger presented by Jews.[126]

Gunnar von Hertzen seems to have had ambitions to lead Finland's far-right revival and install himself, through the Lapua Movement, as leader

of the country. While never even close to this goal, he remained among the leadership of the movement until 1931 and represented the hardliners, who advocated harsh measures against the trade unions in order to crush Communism. With the transformation of the movement into a political party in 1932, Hertzen was increasingly side-lined. He later joined the National Socialist Finland's People's Organisation, but his political activities withdrew into an ever-narrowing local sphere. Post war, he continued to serve as a municipal physician in Viitasaari until his retirement in 1957 and death in 1973.[127]

Gunnar Lindqvist was, together with another increasingly marginalised ultra-nationalist activist, Erkki Räikkönen, involved in putting out the 1943 edition of *The Protocols* in Finnish. The publisher was Siniristi, a "political association" founded and registered in 1942 with the aim of eradicating the influence of "international forces" and "secret societies" from Finnish society and replacing them with "national forces". The end of the war soon put an end to such activities. Lindqvist fled Finland in 1944 in order to take himself to Germany but was interned in Sweden, returning to Finland and post-war obscurity only in the 1950s.[128]

The activities of the Viitasaari Patriotic Club died down with the Lapua Movement, but all of the central figures continued their activities until the end of the Second World War. Jaakkola went on to publish several pamphlets with the same antisemitic, anti-Communist and, towards the end of the war, pro-German tone. He continued to serve as the parson of Viitasaari until his death in 1955. The end of the war marked the end of public political activity for all the former fascist actors, who were forced to either terminate their activities or reinvent themselves under different political themes and symbols.

Antisemitism was not an alien theme to any of the interwar Finnish far-right and fascist movements. Most of them, like the Patriotic Movement [*Isänmaallinen Kansanliike*] founded on the ruins of the Lapua Movement, referred to "ties of blood, fate and culture" as vital preconditions of citizenship and membership of the Finnish nation.[129] This was a covert reference to Jews that would bar them from belonging to the nation. Even when one moved to the openly fascist far right, the rhetoric did not essentially change, as the 1933 programme of Finland's People's Organisation made clear:

> Finnish citizens are only those who recognise themselves as belonging to the blood, destiny, and cultural community of our people. No one whose course of action is under foreign control may thus be a Finnish citizen.[130]

Note that the conspiracist association of Jews and Communism predominates, ahead of mere racist discrimination.

However, as the Viitasaari Patriots discovered to their detriment, their antisemitic conspiracism, describing the Jews through a lens of chimeric

delusions of a sinister conspiracy wedded to the destruction of all things Western and Christian, was not a recipe for success within the interwar Finnish far-right scene. The attempt to make it a part of the ideological core of the Lapua Movement was ultimately unsuccessful. It helped to isolate the Viitasaari people from the right-wing mainstream and eventually confined them to the margins within their own movement. Whatever hopes of eventual political ascendancy they may still have harboured were finally ruined by the collapse of Finland's wartime alliance with Hitler's Germany. Antisemitism in its conspiracist form had promised ultimate understanding of world events, just as fascism had promised to be the final form towards which modern society would evolve. In the end, both proved to be empty promises.

Concluding Observations

Even if we dispute the primary role of German National Socialism in introducing antisemitic conspiracism into the Nordic societies, the early German influence is evident. The works of pre-National Socialist writers like Theodor Fritsch were obviously very important to our actors. Moreover, the theories of Erich Ludendorff – and for some, even personal contact with the general himself – seem to have played a vital role in providing a conspiracist framework into which they placed their antisemitism. This is particularly apparent in the cases of Eugen Nielsen, Sigurd Furugård, and Elof Eriksson.

Due to the dominating role that National Socialism later came to play in spreading political antisemitism in the Nordic countries, there has been a tendency to overlook a perhaps even more important early influence. To the majority of these early promotors of fascism, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* greatly inspired them to develop their antisemitism beyond mere xenophobia and racism. This is clearly the case with Marta Steinsvik, Albert Hiort, Einar Åberg, and Aage H. Andersen. This influence from the East is obviously particularly important in early Finnish fascism, with its close connection to the counter-revolutionary White Russians, but within the Danes' League and the Swedish Antisemitic Society, *The Protocols* also seems to have furthered development of their antisemitism into a monological worldview. Sometimes this influence not only came from reading the text, but also through personal contacts with the antisemitism of the counter-revolutionary Whites at the front, as in the case of Max Arildskov, Konrad Hallgren, Sigurd Furugård, and Gunnar Lindqvist.

The Protocols' list of allies and puppets serving the Jewish world conspiracy is long. In a conspiracist worldview, other conspiracy theories are easily integrated into an ever-expanding hierarchy and network of foes and plots. This seems to be the case with most of our actors, with Eugen Nielsen and Elof Eriksson and their belief in a Masonic and Jesuit conspiracy as the most obvious examples. In the case of Marta Steinsvik and Eugen Nielsen, this also led to them embracing various other forms of stigmatised knowledge

such as esoteric beliefs and practices. Whether this also holds true for others among our actors is difficult to ascertain due to a lack of relevant research.

Our actors played an important role in early Nordic fascism, some as forerunners and founders, others as ideologues. Some, like Elof Eriksson and Einar Åberg, never joined the parties they inspired. Some were excluded or left voluntarily after a short period, like Marta Steinsvik, Eugen Nielsen, Aage H. Andersen, and Olga Eggers. Some stayed on but became increasingly side-lined, like Gunnar von Hertzen and Gunnar Lindqvist. The reason seems to have been that they would not prioritise any other political objective than an all-consuming battle against World Jewry and no other leader in this fight other than themselves. This is why they gradually became a liability to the fascist movements. Hence, their monological conspiracism and self-perception as undisputable prophets thwarted their expectations of political ascendancy.

We usually struggle to determine the demarcations between fascist and far-right movements. Such efforts are seldom practised in relation to antisemitic organisations and parties. If they appear in the fascist epoch of 1918–1945, they are usually defined as fascist despite the fact that antisemitism is not explicitly part of established generic definitions of fascism. This obviously points to the implicit centrality of ultra-nationalism and racism in fascism but raises an epistemological question: If antisemitism was paramount in an organisation – whether or not it was self-designated as fascist – and its supporters regarded fascism and National Socialism as mere platforms for spreading an antisemitic worldview, in what sense of the word was it then fascist? Undoubtedly the individual publicists and organisations studied herein paved the way for fascism in the Nordic countries through recruitment and international (mainly German) relations. To some degree, they also disseminated an antisemitic frame of understanding to a larger public, thus facilitating acceptance of fascist ideas. On the other hand, fascism – and National Socialism in particular – further nourished their conspiracist mindset through access to antisemitic co-thinkers and texts.

In this chapter, we have directed most of our attention towards the biographies and beliefs of early antisemitic pioneers. In order to fully understand the conflicts and discussions their beliefs spurred within the fascist movements, more research is needed. Only then can we fully understand the character and role of antisemitism within Nordic fascism. We have suggested antisemitic conspiracism as a fruitful analytical tool in order to comprehend the nature of this conflict. We suggest that further historical investigation may also benefit analytically from the large body of research into conspiracy theories to reach a more viable generic definition of antisemitism.

Such a definition must take into account the various forms and varieties of antisemitism. It does not necessarily imply a hierarchical system operating on a continuum from "moderate" to "radical", even if it must take into account the actual and potential consequences for the victims of various forms. Racist and conspiracist antisemitism obvious implies more

radical and exclusive measures than xenophobic prejudices and anti-Judaic positions. With reference to Langmuir's *Chimeria*, we should distinguish between racism and conspiracism, both relating to fantasies, yet distinctively different in terms of argumentative logic and style and feasible integration into ideological systems such as – but not limited to – fascism. Distinguishing more clearly between various forms of antisemitism will not only make it possible to explain how Nordic fascists could be xenophobes and racists but not necessarily subscribe to a complete conspiracist worldview – they may even have shied away from such beliefs for tactical or more ideological reasons. This distinction will also make it possible to examine and explain the continuity of antisemitism subsequent to the Second World War, since antisemitic conspiracism has, in fact, shown an astonishing continuity and adaptivity up to the present day.

Notes

1 See, e.g., Eatwell, "Fascism and Racism."
2 Bauerkämper, "Transnational Fascism," 233.
3 Bruknapp, "Ideene splitter partiet," 12–15.
4 Dahl, *En fører blir til*, 380–381.
5 Ibid., 376.
6 In his Quisling biography, Oddvar Høidal observes that the "positive racism" of National Unity, with its belief in the superiority of the *Nordic race*, necessarily entails the belief in the existence of inferior races, e.g., the Jews. Høidal, *Quisling*, 155. The fact that Quisling's first organisation, Nordic People's Rising, incorporated Hans F. K. Günther's racist Nordicism and was recognised by him as part of the Nordic Movement, has hitherto not been explored in detail, even if its Nordicist ideology is mentioned in the passing. Borgersrud, *Den norske militærfascismens historie*, 10–13. For the influence of Günther on Norwegian National Socialism, see Emberland, *Religion og Rase*; Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung."
7 Lauridsen, "DNSAP og 'jødespørgsmålet'," 261–265.
8 Poulsen, *Besættelsesmagten*, 31–34.
9 Lauridsen, "DNSAP og 'jødespørgsmålet'," 263.
10 Bak, *Dansk Antisemitisme*, 52, 54, 176–177, 484; Bak, "Chronicles."
11 Lauridsen, "DNSAP og 'jødespørgsmålet'," 272.
12 Ibid., 270.
13 Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 177.
14 Lööw, *Hakkorset och Wasakärven*, chapt. 7.
15 Muir, "Modes of Displacement," 46–47. Such a bold declaration can be found on the back cover of historian Hannu Rautkallio's 1987 study *Finland and the Holocaust*.
16 Muir, "Modes of Displacement," 52; Swanström, *Hakaristin ritarit*, 64–65; Ahonen, *Antisemitismi*, 17–18. On this tendency, see for instance Uola, *Rintamamiesten*.
17 Andersson, *En jude är en jude är en jude …*; Lien, "'... Pressen kan kun skrive ondt om jøderne';" Emberland, "Antisemittismen i Norge 1900–40."
18 Johansen, "Fordomar og fiendskap," 345–383; Kjørven, *Den Norske Israelsmisjons*; Foss, *Antijudaisme*; Kopperud, "Savnet etter Sør-Afrika." For Denmark, see Lausten, *Frie jøder?*; Lausten, *Folkekirken og jøderne*;

Lausten, *Jødesympati og jødehad*. Conclusions from the above-mentioned works are summarised in Lausten, *Jews and Christians*.

19 See Simonsen, "Antisemittismen i Norge."
20 Hoffmann, "'The New' as a (Jewish) threat," 99–114.
21 For Norway, see Simonsen, "Antisemittismen i Norge." For Denmark, see Bak, *Dansk Antisemitisme*. For Sweden, see Berggren, *Blodets renhet*.
22 Langmuir, *Towards a Definition*.
23 Ibid., 334–337.
24 See, e.g., Trachtenberg, *The Devil*, and Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth*.
25 See, e.g., Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*, and von Bieberstein, *Der Mythos*.
26 See Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*.
27 Browning, *The Origins*, 7.
28 Friedländer, *The Years of Persecution*.
29 Langmuir, *Towards a Definition*, 313–314.
30 Friedländer, *The Years of Persecution*, 87.
31 Uscinski, "What is a Conspiracy Theory," 50. The term *conspiracism* as a descriptive term has been used by historian Kjetil Braut Simonsen in a historical overview of antisemitic conspiracy theories but has not been analytically explored in more detail. Simonsen, "Antisemitism and Conspiracism," 357–370.
32 Barkun, *A Culture of Conspiracy*, 3.
33 See Dyrendal and Emberland, *Hva er konspirasjonsteorier*.
34 Barkun, *A Culture of Conspiracy*, 26–29.
35 Ibid; Barkun, "Conspiracy Theories," 114–120.
36 Goertzel, "Belief in Conspiracy Theories," 15, 731–742.
37 Berger, *Extremism*.
38 Fenster, *Conspiracy Theories*, 110–111.
39 Bilewicz et al., "Harmful Ideas," 821–839.
40 See, e.g., Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*; Benz, *Die Protokolle*; Horn and Hagermeister, eds., *Die Fiktion*.
41 Simonsen, "Antisemitism and Conspiracism," 361.
42 Hagermeister, "Antichrist."
43 A pioneering work on the early promoters of *The Protocols* in Norway is Ringdal, "'Norge, vokn op!'"
44 Eco, "Ur-Fascism."
45 Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, xi.
46 The differences between the various movements self-designated as National Socialist are so great that this concept must also be used generically, as a constructed ideal type and a subcategory within generic fascism. Since the analytical work required to develop such a generic definition of National Socialism has not yet been carried out, we choose *fascist* as the collective term.
47 This perspective contrasts with the perception of antisemitism within National Socialism as a product of a German historical *Sonderweg*, which excludes it from "the family of fascism."
48 Neocleous, "Racism, Fascism and Nationalism," 356.
49 Mosse, *The Crisis*, 4.
50 Kallis, *Genocide and Fascism*, 121.
51 Ibid.
52 Langmuir, *Towards a Definition*, 349.
53 The brief and turbulent history of this movement is presented in Emberland, *Da fascismen kom til Norge*.
54 Amm, "Ludendorff-Bewegung," 393–396.
55 Riksarkivet Oslo (RA), L-sak Eugen Nielsen, Nielsen's statement [undated].
56 *Tidens Tegn*, 10 April 1937.

57 *Norsk Kunngjørelsesblad*, 15 March 1929.
58 *Ekstrabladet*, 15 September 1931.
59 For more on Hiort, see Aasvangen, "*En fare som truer.*" For Hiort and Steinsvik, see Ringdal, "'Norge, vokn op!'" For more on British-Israelism and its later permutations, see Barkun, *Religion*.
60 Simonsen, "Den store jødebevægelse."
61 Redegjørelse for Norsk Folkereisnings retningslinjer, 56.
62 Nanko, "Das Spektrum," 216–219.
63 *Nasjonalsosialisten*, 1 January 1934.
64 RA Oslo, L-sak Fred Wilhelm Dohrn, Dohrn's statement, 26 January 1946.
65 In September 1933, Hitler had banned Ludendorff's *Tannenbergbund*, along with other *völkisch*-racist organisations that were perceived as competitors of the Nazi party. However, due to the general's position as a war hero and one of Hitler's early supporters, he and his wife were allowed to run their publishing house until the outbreak of the war and to publish the magazine *Am heiligen Quell deutscher Kraft*.
66 Ringdal, "'Norge, vokn op!'," 91–94.
67 For correspondence between Eriksson and Nielsen, see Riksarkivet Stockholm (RA), Eric Wärenstam's collection, vol. 11.
68 Se Bøgebjerg, *Jødisk Aand*.
69 Thing, *De russiske jøder*, 475. Indeed, it was Bøgebjerg who encouraged the Danish translator Gudrun Rørdam to publish under a pseudonym [Lauritz Clausen] to protect herself from public resentment, *National-Socialisten*, 30 July 1933.
70 Lauridsen, *Dansk nazisme*, 497.
71 Thing, *De russiske jøder*, 490.
72 Kirkebæk, *Den Yderste Grænse*, 452–455, concludes that antisemitism from this time on became a main feature of Arildskov's anti-Communism.
73 Later, Arildskov published several antisemitic books and tracts, e.g., *Den jødiske højfinans* (1930) and *Den Jødiske Imperialisme* (1936). Kirkebæk, *Den Yderste Grænse*, 458.
74 As late as 1935, the Ministry of Justice found that there was an antisemitic faction within the Conservative Youth movement. See Rigsarkivet Copenhagen, Ministry of Justice's 3rd office, j.nr. 1935/98. That young conservatives in their formative years had contact with the League may explain why the Danish Conservative Party first took a final stand against internal fascist tendencies as late as 1936. That year, the party chairman, John Christmas Møller, effected a change of chairman in the conservative youth movement, whereby the moderate Aksel Møller replaced the pro-fascist activist Jack Westergaard.
75 Lausten, *Jøder og Kristne*, 280.
76 Lauridsen, *Dansk nazisme*, 482.
77 Lauridsen, "DNSAP og 'jødespørgsmålet'," 272.
78 Bak, *Dansk Antisemitisme*, 54–55.
79 Nilus, *Zions Vises Protokoller*, 1–2.
80 Andersen, Er "Zions Vises Protokoller" et falsum?, 34.
81 In addition, Aage H. Andersen corresponded with H. Brunøe. Rigsarkivet Copenhagen, Archives of Dansk Antijødisk Liga, package no. 19, 22, 24.
82 Rigsarkivet Copenhagen, Archives of Dansk Antijødisk Liga, package no. 49, "N.S.A.P.'s 6-Aarsdag" [undated manuscript].
83 *Kamptegnet* 30, 1942, 12.
84 Bak, *Dansk Antisemitisme*; Bak, "Den røde synd," 267–302.
85 Rigsarkivet Copenhagen, Archives of Dansk Antijødisk Liga, package no. 1, letter to the members [undated].

86 Rigsarkivet Copenhagen, Archives of Dansk Antijødisk Liga, package no. 32, private letter, 28 April 1940.
87 Similar results can be deduced from Theodore Abel's collection of testimonies. See Merkl, "Dimensions," 298.
88 After the Second World War, the Danes' League was erased from collective memory, and the attempts made to reinstate some of its prominent members grossly understated their antisemitic past. Thus, the architect Alfred Råvad received a biography in 1990 that did not mention his role in the association, just as it omitted any analysis of Råvad's ideological position. See Madsen, *Chicago – København*. See also a biography of another League member, Hans Jacob Hansen, which is an explicit attempt at rehabilitation and thus displays an apologetic approach to his antisemitism, Buhl, *H.J. Hansen*. Brunøe, on the other hand, scandalised himself by joining the DNSAP, but since this was not the case with the others, their reputation was seemingly intact.
89 *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, "Lundén släkt." https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/9811.
90 Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 24–27.
91 Carlsson, *Nazismen i Sverige*, 15.
92 Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige*, 320.
93 Berggren, Blodets renhet, 57.
94 Ibid., 56.
95 Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige*, 13.
96 Private Archive of Heléne Lööw, Report to Göteborgs Detektiva Polis, 27 May 1924. See also Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 33.
97 Svenska Nationalsocialistiska Partiet, *Furugård*, 7, 9.
98 Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 33.
99 Ibid., 26–30.
100 Berggren, *Blodets renhet*, 55.
101 Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 27.
102 Lööw, *Hakkorset och wasakärven*, 215–218.
103 Berggren, *Blodets renhet*, 115–220.
104 Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 49.
105 Berggren, "Elof Eriksson," 45.
106 RA Stockholm, Sven Olov Lindholm's archive, Sven Olov Lindholm – transcription of taped interview, 1980.
107 Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 5.
108 Kellogg, "Hitler's 'Russian' Connection."
109 Blomqvist, *Myten om judebolsjevismen*, 111–115.
110 Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 47–50.
111 RA Stockholm, Eric Wärenstam's collection, vol. 11, Eriksson's international correspondence.
112 Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 177.
113 Lööw, *Hakkorset och wasakärven*, 217.
114 Berggren, "Elof Eriksson," 42.
115 Berggren, *Blodets renhet*, 321. These included Holger Möllman Palmgren, Åke Tranéus, Axel Olson Molund and Carl Ernfrid Carlberg, the latter being of particular interest. The wealthy property-owner Carl Ernfrid Carlberg was the foremost financier of Swedish fascism. For a long time, his publishing house, *Svea Rikes bokförlag*, published fascist and antisemitic literature. He also organised the Manhem Society [*Samfundet Manhem*] as a think tank for Swedish National Socialists, radical nationalists and antisemites. Carlberg also played a significant role in reorganising Swedish fascism after 1945.

116 Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige*, 136–143; Wärenstam, *Fascismen och nazismen*, 145–150. Berggren, Blodets renhet, 321–325.
117 Berggren, *Blodets renhet*, 321–325. Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige*, 136–143. Åberg was the first to be sentenced for racist harassment in Sweden. In fact, the newly (1948) introduced law against hate speech, which enabled the sentencing, was called the "Lex Åberg." This finally put an end to his antisemitic campaigning.
118 National Archives of Finland, Helsinki, EK-Valpo I, case dossier XXII E 1, Order of the Day 3, 8 January 1920: "Erikoisesti juutalaisten suhteen on oltava äärettömän tarkkoja, sillä saatujen tietojen mukaan lienee ainakin 80% kaikista bolshevikkijohtajista juutalaisia."
119 Silvennoinen, *Geheime Waffenbrüderschaft*, 63. Major publications in the field of international antisemitic literature were by no means slow to reach Finland. The Tharaud brothers, noted French novelists, had published their work describing the Communist coup attempt in Hungary in 1921. By 1923, *Werner Söderström*, a major Finnish publishing house, had secured the rights and produced a translation.
120 Ahonen, *Antisemitismi*, 215–217.
121 Virtanen, "Toimikaa, älkää odottako," 250–251. Ekberg, *Führerns trogna följeslagare*, 109.
122 Ekberg, *Führerns trogna följeslagare*, 109.
123 Ibid., 105–106.
124 Ekberg, *Führerns trogna följeslagare*, 101–104. The Finlands Folkorganisation [*Suomen Kansan Järjestö*] was led by Arvi Kalsta, a former officer with a *Jäger* background and an open admirer of Hitler, who consciously sought to model his movement on the NSDAP, and to seek mass support by appealing particularly to the working class with exhortations against "Judeo-Marxism."
125 Ahonen, *Antisemitismi*, 225–227.
126 Manninen, Viitasaaren historia, 443–444; Ahonen, Antisemitismi, 240.
127 Ekberg, *Führerns trogna följeslagare*, 109, 111. In 1931, Hertzen became involved in the publishing company *Vasara* [Hammer], which would go on to publish antisemitic and anti-Masonic material, but his marginalisation within the most radical circles of Finnish National Socialists was irrevocable.
128 Lindqvist and Räikkönen, eds., *Siionin viisaitten pöytäkirjat*.
129 Isänmaallisen Kansanliikkeen yleiset ohjelmaperusteet.
130 Finlands Folkorganisations riktlinjer.

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2 National Socialisms in Clinch

The Case of Norwegian National Socialists in Interwar Germany

Nicola Karcher

In 1939, the Berlin-based Norwegian businessman Salomon Clausen wrote to the prominent Norwegian fascist Vidkun Quisling. In his letter, he offered the leader of the Norwegian national socialist party National Unity [*Nasjonal Samling*, NS] his help on behalf of his own organisation Norwegian National Socialists in Germany [*Norske Nasjonalsosialister i Tyskland*, NNST][1]: If Quisling really wanted to learn the "true technics" of National Socialism, he needed to come to Germany under his supervision. The letter clearly illustrates that there were several actors who claimed to be the vanguards of fascism in the Nordic countries and who must be considered a pre-collaborative force.[2]

However, with regard to transnational Nordic fascism before 1945 in general, Norwegian fascist activism outside Norway is still an understudied topic. Even research on the relationships between Norwegian fascists and the National Socialist regime in Germany has been limited, until recently, with a disproportional focus on the party National Unity. Other Norwegian fascist groups have been investigated only on the periphery, while systematic research on their cooperation with German National Socialists was almost non-existent until just a decade ago when I finished my PhD thesis on that topic, and the researchers Terje Emberland and Matthew Kott published their book on the SS in Norway, which also explores its network building with Norwegian activists.[3]

By discussing the organisation Norwegian National Socialists as part of the landscape of Nordic fascism, this chapter contributes to the development of the field of entangled Nordic fascism studies and seeks to place Norwegian fascist activities in a broader international research context. Exploring a Norwegian fascist organisation outside Norway, it highlights a topic apart from the Norwegian mainstream research on fascism.

A complex network of German-Norwegian fascist contacts existed at latest from the early 1930s. In contrast to most other Norwegian fascists, the organisation Norwegian National Socialists was not only established in Germany but also concentrated its activities (at least for most of the time) in Germany. Thus, the focus of this chapter is on Norwegian-German fascist activism in interwar Germany.

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To begin with the fulcrum, National Unity was the only party in Nazi-occupied Europe that Hitler allowed to establish a collaboration government, totally ignoring its political insignificance in pre-war Norway. Already on 9 April 1940, the day of the German invasion into Norway, party leader Vidkun Quisling had gained worldwide notoriety due to his attempted coup, which made his name synonymous with a traitor to the nation ever since.[4] Although he was removed by the German authorities after a few days, the collaboration regime, established in autumn 1940, was built on Quisling's party, and from 1942 onwards, Quisling himself was *Ministerpresident* of the so-called national government.[5] The overriding interest in National Unity, both from researchers and the Norwegian public in general, has obviously been reasonable. However, this regime – even if it had very little room to manoeuvre – overshadowed the fact that a number of Norwegian fascist activists had far more and better networks with German National Socialists before 1940. The party's standing in the occupation regime drew the attention of both scholars and the broader public away from these initiatives, thus reducing the history of Norwegian fascism to the history of National Unity.

This clearly illustrates the need for a more complex transnational and entangled approach to Norwegian fascism. As most likely the only formalised Norwegian national socialist organisation in interwar Germany, Norwegian National Socialists are of particular interest. Established in 1933, the organisation was founded for three main reasons: to win over the Norwegians residing in Germany to National Socialism and to offer them a political platform, to work for the breakthrough of National Socialism in Norway, and to build connections with the National Socialist regime in Germany. Thus, besides describing the organisation's establishment, social structure, and political profile, this chapter will show how Norwegian National Socialists functioned as a pre-collaborative force by establishing networks with representatives of the National Socialist regime and with like-minded Nordic groups inside and outside Germany.

The analysis builds on a large body of sources, most of them process and police investigation files from the Norwegian treason trials against collaborators after the war. However, these sources are not unproblematic. In general, the treason trials were highly politicised, and most members of Norwegian National Socialists who were investigated and stood trial obviously attempted to play down their role to minimise their sentence. And, more importantly, the police investigations prior to the trials, and the trials themselves, focused on the collaboration *in* Norway and *during* the German occupation.[6] In other words, the activities of Norwegian National Socialists in the 1930s were of little interest unless they pertained to the later activities of National Unity. But even though information on Norwegian National Socialists is still fragmented, the available sources are valid enough to add another piece to the transnational puzzle of Nordic fascism.

Norwegian-German Fascist Cooperation in Interwar Germany

In the landscape of transnational Norwegian-German fascism, Norwegian National Socialists were only one of several Nordic organisations whose members considered themselves the "true" representatives of National Socialism.[7] Other networks and groups were initiated in the same period, some earlier, with overlapping interests and approaches. What characterised most of these was the perception of National Socialism as a "true" *Nordic* ideology. Fascism, on the other hand, was identified with Italy and viewed as something foreign, including in a racial sense.[8] It is therefore important to keep in mind that this chapter, in accordance with this volume's theoretical frame, operates with the term fascism as an overarching, generic category.[9]

All in all, most Norwegian fascists who were in contact with German National Socialists, or representatives of the National Socialist regime, participated in several organisations. This was also the case regarding the leading members of Norwegian National Socialists. Thus, the landscape of Norwegian-German fascist cooperation was a multitudinous field of changing power relationships.

Regarding transnational initiatives that originated in Germany, an early starting point was in the mid-1920s, with the so-called Nordic Movement that had emerged as a subcategory of the older and more prominent *Völkisch* Movement, whose origins date back to the German Empire in the second half of the 19th century.[10] While the Völkisch Movement in general represented aggressive nationalism, antisemitism, and racism, the Nordic Movement additionally turned towards the Nordic countries, with the perceived Nordic-Germanic brotherhood occupying a prominent place in its worldview.[11] This development was to become central for Norwegian-German fascist cooperation in the interwar and war years.

Within the Nordic Movement, the organisation Nordic Ring [*Nordischer Ring*, NR] played a significant role both ideologically and regarding cooperation with like-minded persons in the Nordic countries.[12] The organisation's chief ideologist, the German race researcher Hans F.K. Günther, married to a Norwegian and a resident in Norway and Sweden for several years, established collaboration with colleagues in the Nordic countries, who had a huge impact on his research and also joined the Nordic Ring.[13] One of Günther's most prominent proponents was Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, who later used his ideological concepts – in particular, the *Nordic thought* [*Nordischer Gedanke*][14] – as an ideological basis of the SS. As Claus Bundgård Christensen and Terje Emberland show in this volume, Himmler worked from early on to win over members from the Nordic countries to his organisation.[15] Among these individuals was the founder of Norwegian National Socialists.

With the suppression of the Völkisch Movement from 1933 onwards, the Nordic Movement as such became marginalised, and a number of its most

influential members joined the NSDAP – in fact, a lot of them had already done so before 1933. By this means, the key ideas of the Nordic Movement survived as an integral part of National Socialism.[16] In 1936, the Nordic Ring – and accordingly its networks within the Nordic countries – became incorporated into the Nordic Society [*Nordische Gesellschaft*, NG], which was forced into line three years earlier. Originally established in the early 1920s as a non-political organisation for supporting cultural and economic cooperation between Germany and the Nordic countries, the society now functioned as an important platform for transnational National Socialism.[17] The problem that the Finns, according to a number of Nordic race theories, were not considered "true" Nordic was purposively ignored.[18]

Headed by high-ranking NSDAP members and former proponents of the Nordic Movement – the most prominent of which were Himmler himself (from 1935) and his close ally, the "blood and soil" ideologist and chief of the SS Race and Settlement Main Office [*Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt*, RuSHA], Richard Walther Darré – the Nordic Society started out as a major facilitator of fascist networks with the Nordic countries. Among its Norwegian supporters was the prominent national socialist Olaf Willy Fermann, who played an important role in the establishment of Norwegian National Socialists.

With Hitler's so-called chief ideologist Alfred Rosenberg as patron of the Nordic Society, the strong entanglement with the NSDAP Office of Foreign Affairs [*Außenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP*, APA], also headed by Rosenberg, was ensured. His adjutant and leader of the department North [*Abteilung Norden*] in the APA, Thilo von Trotha, formed an early bridge between the National Socialist movement and the Nordic countries. A disciple of both Hans F.K. Günther and Darré, he was one of the leading networkers of what historian Dietrich Loock has called the "Nordic foreign policy"[19] of German National Socialists.

Already in 1931, von Trotha and Rosenberg took notice of Quisling, who was the Minister of Defence in Norway at that time. The association that arose was pursued by von Trotha's colleague, Wilhelm Scheidt, after von Trotha's death in 1938 and resulted in Quisling's two notorious meetings with Hitler at the Reich Chancellery in December 1939. The conversations which took place between the two are considered the starting point for the planning of the invasion of Norway and Hitler's desire to make Quisling and National Unity a crucial part of the future occupation regime.[20]

What turned out to be the climax in Norwegian-German fascist networking in the interwar years did not, however, have a very promising start. The "Nordic faction" in the NSDAP regarded several Norwegian national socialists as more promising in terms of cooperation, and networks were built in several directions from early on. Since the Nordic Society, against all odds, did not become the spearhead of the Nordic National Socialist cooperation, due to NSDAP internal power struggles, which considerably weakened Rosenberg's position,[21] alternatives were developed. The Nordic Society

continued as a showroom for leading Nordic fascists,[22] but those who sought to establish potent cooperation with the National Socialist regime explored other networks as well.

It is striking that Norwegian National Socialists did not seem to play a role in this Nordic cooperation. Contact with Rosenberg took place in 1934 but was probably not followed up.[23] As mentioned, however, Norwegian National Socialists must be considered part of Himmler's broader circle of Scandinavian collaborators, at least in its first period. Here, the decisive connection was the organisation Norway's National Socialist Workers' Party [*Norges Nasjonalsosialistiske Arbeiderparti*, NNSAP] and its leader Adolf Egeberg Jr.[24]

Established in 1932, NNSAP was the first Norway-based organisation that stressed a national socialist profile.[25] It consisted mostly of young activists, many of them still high school students, who partly tried to copy the NSDAP. Even though NNSAP remained a political outsider, Himmler's SS showed an early interest in the organisation when looking for potential protégés from the Nordic countries in the early 1930s.[26] As a result of these efforts, NNSAP leader Egeberg Jr. became one of the first Norwegian SS members in 1932. Even though the organisation mainly operated in Norway, and he left NNSAP in favour of National Unity in 1933, Egeberg Jr. can be considered the vital spark in the establishment of Norwegian National Socialists. In other words, this group was the result of early Norwegian-German fascist networking.

Norwegian National Socialists in the Landscape of Norwegian Fascism

As with most other Nordic fascist initiatives in the interwar years, Norwegian National Socialists never became a large organisation. Its emergence signifies that Nordic fascism first and foremost was driven by small groups seeking to develop networks with like-minded organisations in order to herald the breakthrough of fascism in the Nordic countries. The success of these networks depended on whether their initiators were able to establish reliable cooperation with powerful allies. Overlapping interests and ideological consensus were crucial for the maintenance of cooperation. In most cases, it was the political capability of their leaders, rather than their actual size, which determined the political impact of these groups.

Establishment, Social Structure, and Political Profile

When Norwegian National Socialists were founded in Berlin on 22 June 1933, they were probably envisaged as a kind of outpost for Norway's National Socialist Workers' Party.[27] The cooperation between these two organisations, however, seemed to peter out shortly after, and it remains unclear whether Norwegian National Socialists received any instructions

from its sister organisation in Norway. One reason for the sparse contact between the groups was probably Egeberg Jr.'s shift to National Unity the same year, in which he began to be more politically involved.

As the name and its founding year clearly indicate, Norwegian National Socialists were not only motivated by the previous efforts of Egeberg Jr. but also by the consolidation of the National Socialist regime in Germany in spring 1933. It is obvious that the organisation hoped to profit from its contacts with the new leaders.[28]

The first leader of Norwegian National Socialists, Paul Gudmund Gundersen, had been part of the German National Socialist movement since 1932. He moved to Germany in 1920 to study mathematics and naturopathy in Berlin and worked as a healing practitioner in the German capital until his return to Norway in 1935. A member of Jehovah's Witnesses for 15 years, Gundersen left the denomination in 1932, the same year he joined the SA and the SS. With this step, he replaced the millenarism of Jehovah's Witnesses with the SS ideology of a 1000-year-long Germanic Reich and became one of the first documented Norwegian activists to participate in National Socialist organisations in Germany.[29]

The background to this involvement were Egeberg Jr.'s efforts to establish contact for Gundersen with the NSDAP's paramilitary organisations. The two had probably met in 1931/1932 in Germany, possibly at a SS event in Berlin. Shortly after Gundersen joined NNSAP, the organisation contacted the Brown House in Munich to arrange for Gundersen to take part in the SA. When he had a personal meeting with Himmler a little while later, it turned out that the Reichsführer-SS already had been asked by NNSAP – most likely by Egeberg Jr. himself – to introduce Gundersen to the SS.[30] As a result of Himmler's personal initiative, he was assigned to a SS-Sturm in Berlin-Grunewald and participated in both SS and SA actions.[31] Only a few months after he left the SS the following year, he started Norwegian National Socialists in Germany.[32] In short, it is most likely that the organisation's establishment was motivated by Egeberg Jr.'s and the SS's previous efforts. As we will see, it was also part of a comprehensive joint Scandinavian initiative, which took place in the early summer of 1933.[33]

According to the few sources that exist in relation to its establishment, only a handful of individuals took part in the founding assembly on 22 June 1933. Besides Gundersen himself, who was appointed as country leader [*Landesleiter*] for Germany and Austria, the Norwegian businessman Salomon Clausen was listed in attendance on that day.[34] Clausen, who had been permanently living in Berlin since 1927, did not seem to be politically visible at that time; however, starting out as the organisation's treasurer, he came to play the most significant role in Norwegian National Socialists in the following years. He acted first as Gundersen's right-hand man and then took over as leader in 1935, when Gundersen returned to Norway. Clausen's premises in the Konstanzer Strasse 5 in Berlin functioned as the headquarters of the organisation.[35]

By the end of the summer of 1933, another chapter was established in Hamburg by businessman Olaf Willy Fermann.[36] He was one of the most well-connected Norwegian fascists and played a prominent role in Norwegian-German national socialist networks. Educated in England, France, and Germany, and having worked in Copenhagen, Gdansk, and at the Norwegian consulate in St. Petersburg during the First World War – where he met Quisling for the first time – Fermann was both familiar with the world of international business and well-acquainted with the European upper class. During his stay in Gdansk, he befriended Werner Lorenz and his sister Erika Lorenz, Himmler's private secretary – a relationship which lasted beyond 1945. Through Lorenz, a leading SS and NSDAP member with close relationships to the noble elites of the former German Empire, Fermann became acquainted with prominent German National Socialists. Already in 1928, Lorenz had introduced him to Himmler, at a time when the SS was still a subdivision of the SA. The same year, Fermann settled down in Hamburg, and from 1936 in Berlin.[37] In both cities, he was a central figure in the Norwegian milieu, while he also cultivated relationships with the National Socialist regime. Throughout the 1930s, Fermann most likely became Himmler's closest Norwegian ally, and, as such, part of Himmler's plans to colonise Eastern Europe with "Germanic" settlers, the so-called *Ostkolonisationspläne*. Only a few weeks before the occupation of Norway, he returned to Oslo, where he formed an important bridge between Norwegian SS volunteers and the German SS-leadership.[38] In other words, Fermann represents the ideal type of a transnational businessman and fascist, who knew how to capitalise on his networks with the regime in Germany.

His involvement with Norwegian National Socialists, however, was a short-lived affair. In 1934, he was appointed as National Unity's official representative in Germany, with the title *Gauleiter*, and he left the group in favour of Quisling's party.[39] His breakup with Norwegian National Socialists would have drastic consequences for the later foreign work of National Unity.

Despite the success of National Socialism in Germany, Norwegian National Socialists did not seem to be overrun by people interested in joining the organisation. Recruitment took place mainly through personal contacts and the NNSAP paper *Fronten*, as well as Norwegian National Socialists' own member magazine *Iaktageren*, named after the NSDAP newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter*. From 1936, *Iaktageren* was managed by NNSAP,[40] which indicates that there was still cooperation between the two organisations.

However, only one record on membership exists, compiled during the war, which is incomplete and only consists of persons who were still members in 1940. For the period between 1933 and 1939, of the approximately 60 members who are listed, more than half joined Norwegian National Socialists at the first general assembly on 29 August 1933 and in the following months. While there were some new entrants in the first half of 1934,

none are documented for the following three years, which indicates that the record was not updated regularly or probably not at all. Resignations and returns to Norway do not appear on the record either.[41]

It can therefore be surmised that the Norwegian milieu in Germany was reluctant towards the organisation or little aware of it – at least outside Berlin and Hamburg. This, however, does not indicate a lack of sympathy towards National Socialism, as several testimonies from Norwegians located in Germany prove,[42] and one must assume that more individuals were associated with the organisation than it was possible to document. An example of this is Gundersen's function as leader of the Bremen chapter, which indicates that the organisation was active there as well, even if sources on this involvement are lacking.[43] Besides, when compared to similar Nordic fascist groups, Norwegian National Socialists were not faring badly, given that the number of Norwegians resident in Germany was lower than that of Swedes and Danes.[44] In fact, Norwegian National Socialists managed to gain a higher percentage of members than its major rival National Unity was able to do in occupied Norway after 1940.[45]

Regarding its social structure, Norwegian National Socialists did not consist of young radical activists, as did a number of Nordic fascist organisations, such as NNSAP and Denmark's National Socialist Party [*Danmarks National Socialistiske Parti*].[46] On the contrary, its members were much more like the leaders of these groups, that is, middle-aged and financially well off.[47] The average age of the members was between 39 and 41, and they had lived in Germany for several years, where they were socially established. Many of them, such as Clausen and Fermann, were married to Germans, and, with very few exceptions, they worked in business or engineering.[48] As their places of residence in largely well-heeled boroughs in Berlin and Hamburg indicate, they had a bourgeois background and belonged to the upper middle-class.[49] All in all, the majority of the organisation's members were well-established, transnational businessmen who offered their service to the National Socialist regime in order to gain personal advantage.

At the same time, one must not underestimate their commitment to National Socialism. Although only a few sources describing the political profile of Norwegian National Socialists exist, and the political guidelines that seemed to have been developed are still missing,[50] some observations can be made.

In general, it is unlikely that Norwegian National Socialists contributed original ideas to the movement. For the most part, they aligned ideologically with the National Socialist regime in Germany rather than aimed at a specific *Norwegian* or *Nordic* fascism. Radical nationalism was identified with being a national socialist.[51] In accordance with other Nordic fascist groups, cooperating with Nazi Germany was considered essential for the survival of the Nordic race. Supporting Germany in its struggle "for all the Aryan people" would therefore mean helping Norway. The "true technics" of National Socialism were to be learned in Nazi Germany, which is why

Salomon Clausen, on behalf of Norwegian National Socialists, invited Quisling to a study trip to Germany – even though the group had long ago turned down the possibility of joining National Unity. Since he was convinced that only Norwegian National Socialists understood the true nature of National Socialism, Quisling was considered a potential junior partner.[52]

In accordance with a general solidarity with the National Socialist regime and ideology, antisemitism had a central place in the organisation's political profile.[53] In fact, in light of what Clausen wrote on behalf of Norwegian National Socialists in 1939, it seems that National Socialism was considered the most convenient tool to put an end to the *Judaism of the world* and that solving the so-called Jewish question was his main concern. In that case, Clausen could be classified with those antisemites who canalised their hatred against the Jews into fascism. The question of whether these radical antisemites hoped to use fascism for their political purposes is explored in Bak's and Emberland's chapter in this volume.[54]

Regarding Clausen's more specific utterances on this topic, he made it quite clear that he was convinced that the Jews had declared open war against the whole Nordic race and that Germany as the country at the centre of this war was "only" fighting back. All possible assaults against the Jews should therefore be regarded as self-defence and a necessary retaliation. As an "ancient-pure original-Aryan people", the Norwegians would not only be part of this war, but also a real unification of Norwegian national interests would imply the expansion of world hatred against the Jews in Norway.[55] In the light of his aggressive, eliminatory antisemitism, it is hardly surprising that Clausen changed his first name Salomon to Gunnar in 1942.[56]

Cooperation and Networks

Similar to all the other foreign fascist groups in Germany, establishing cooperation with the new regime and like-minded groups was crucial. Besides Gundersen's early contacts with Himmler and the SS, it seems that the SA treated Norwegian National Socialists as its protégé in the following years. Few sources exist to confirm this, but the fact that they were allowed to wear SA uniforms and that Fermann's legitimation card as leader of the Northern Germany chapter of Norwegian National Socialists functioned as SA identification indicate the group's link with the SA.[57]

In general, closeness to the National Socialist regime was clearly not only an ambition but also highly necessary to be politically active in Germany. Arranging gatherings proved difficult in the beginning but were soon permitted, since, according to Norwegian National Socialists member Audun Rusten, "our political attitude was absolutely clear".[58] As several other former members revealed after the war, membership in the organisation conferred certain advantages. The Gestapo would, for example, double-check the membership of Norwegians in Norwegian National Socialists as an indicator of political reliability.[59]

The organisation's position in Nazi Germany is further emphasised by a valuation the Allies made after 1945, which inclined them to expropriate property belonging to members of Norwegian National Socialists in line with NSDAP property.[60] This clearly put the group on a level with all other official National Socialist organisations in Germany. During the treason trials in Norway, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs came to a similar conclusion regarding Norwegian National Socialists' relationship to the NSDAP:

> The membership in NNST [Norwegian National Socialists] under such circumstances is not only to treat as equal with participation in N.S. [National Unity]. It is much worse. The members of this association were in solidarity with NSDAP. […] In any case, it is clear that our worst traitors were recruited from this organisation.[61]

Joint events and gatherings with participants from outside the organisation were a crucial part of the networking of Norwegian National Socialists, and cooperation with Swedish and Danish national socialist groups in Germany seemed to have been more or less formalised.[62] Their joint networking resulted, for example, in cooperation with the antisemitic *Welt-Dienst*.[63] Once again, this underscores the role of antisemitism in Norwegian National Socialists.

The *Welt-Dienst* was a journal, a press agency, and a publishing house with an international net of correspondents, which, from the mid-1930s, also organised the international congresses of antisemites.[64] It was founded in 1933 in Erfurt by Ulrich Fleischhauer,[65] a self-proclaimed expert on the so-called Jewish question as well as an early proponent of the *Madagascar solution*, and the Austrian-Hungarian diplomat Georg de Pottere,[66] organiser of a number of antisemitic activities across Europe and author of several anti-Jewish publications. From 1937 onwards, Alfred Rosenberg secured his influence in the *Welt-Dienst*, which was fully taken over by his Rosenberg Office [*Amt Rosenberg*] in 1939.[67]

Already in 1935, the antisemitic paper *Ekko* had been established in Norway by the NNSAP member, Yngvar Fyhn, who not only cooperated with the *Welt-Dienst* but also obtained most of his paper's information from it.[68] Since Norwegian National Socialists had far more and better networks in Germany then NNSAP at that point, one might assume that they helped to establish this contact.

The joint Swedish-Norwegian-Danish cooperation with the *Welt-Dienst* resulted in three Scandinavian editions.[69] These editions, however, were published at a time when de Portere had left the journal, Fleischhauer was marginalised, and Rosenberg was in charge. The Norwegian and Swedish editions *Verdens-tjenesten* and *Världs-service*, respectively, were published from 1940 to 1944, the Danish edition *Verdens-service* until 1945.[70] The first editor of the Norwegian edition was Audun Rusten, an outstanding member

of Norwegian National Socialists until he shifted his activism to National Unity's Foreign Office [*Nasjonal Samlings Utenriksorganisasjon*, NSUO] in Berlin from autumn 1940.[71] Again, the example of the cooperation with the *Welt-Dienst* illustrates that antisemitic activism was a central part of Nordic fascism.

In general, little is known in detail about the cooperation between Norwegian National Socialists and Danish and Swedish fascists in Germany. Rather, smaller events, such as a concert in Berlin to which the Swedish national socialists invited their Norwegian companions and a joint wreath-laying ceremony by Danish and Norwegian national socialists at Horst Wessel's grave, are documented. Together, these groups also published a protest in the *Völkischer Beobachter* against how they were portrayed in the Scandinavian press.[72] When the leader of the Swedish National Socialist Workers' Party [*Nationalsocialistiska Arbetarpartiet*, later called the Swedish Socialist Gathering – *Svensk socialistisk samling*] Sven Olof Lindholm visited Germany in September 1933, Norwegian and Danish national socialists were invited to the gatherings in Hamburg and Berlin.[73]

Although Norwegian National Socialists did not identify which particular Swedish and Danish organisations they collaborated with,[74] it is most likely that the Swedish group was an outpost of Lindholm's National Socialist Workers' Party. Founded in 1932 in Hamburg and Berlin by Swedes who were resident in Germany, the party first joined with Birger Furugård's Swedish National Socialist Party [*Svenska nationalsocialistiska partiet*]. After the breakup between Furugård and Lindholm, the party defected to Lindholm's movement in summer 1933.[75] This decision seemed to have been, at least partly, directed by the National Socialist regime in Germany, which sought to establish a consolidated Swedish national socialist movement.[76]

Regarding the cooperation with Danish national socialist groups, the picture is more complicated. However, Ejnar Vaaben's Danish National Socialist Party [*Dansk Nationalsocialistisk Parti*] and Denmark's National Socialist Party of his later brother-in-law Poul Sommer had chapters in Germany, established in 1932/1933. While the first was active in both Hamburg and Berlin, the latter concentrated its work in the German capital. Following Bundgård Christensen and Emberland, Himmler also might have motivated the establishment of these chapters.[77] Already in 1932, Vaaben had joined Cay Lembcke's National Socialist Workers' Party of Denmark [*Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Arbejderparti*], and the two German chapters followed him.[78] Denmark's National Socialist Party merged with the Danish National Socialist Party [*National Socialistiske Parti*] – another small-scale national socialist initiative. What happened to the German chapter in Berlin is unclear.

The tight relationships between the Norwegian, Danish, and Swedish national socialists in Germany were particularly due to their joint Nordic agenda. According to *Kampen*, the party newspaper of Denmark's National-Socialist Party, the initiative to establish Scandinavian national socialist

groups in Germany came from the group of Swedish national socialists in Hamburg. Any formal interference from the German authorities was denied.[79] What these Scandinavian groups had in common, however, was that Himmler and his SS had pulled the strings behind the scenes previous to their establishment by motivating a German-Nordic cooperation.[80] The joint ambition of the Scandinavian national socialist groups – information regarding the possible existence of a Finnish chapter is lacking – was to unite all "Scandinavians of Aryan descent"[81] in Germany on the basis of National Socialism, and to work towards the spreading of National Socialism in their respective home countries. Although their main focus was directed at Scandinavia, building one united national socialist Scandinavian front in Nazi Germany was considered decisive and Nordic solidarity as the key to their future success. In the words of *Kampen*:

> We attach a particular importance to the Scandinavian cooperation. We all here feel like brothers, and there has not been the slightest disagreement in between us. We are – all three nations – a welded together unit here, and it is our hope that we especially can be a small role model for fellow-countrymen at home.[82]

The ambition to serve as "a small role model" was, however, an understatement. The three Scandinavian groups shared the same self-understanding that based on their joint experience from Nazi Germany, they would be pioneers regarding the breakthrough of National Socialism in the Nordic countries,[83] which also Clausen made perfectly clear to Quisling several years later.

His letter to the leader of National Unity in 1939, when the party at that time had been reduced to a political sect with a radical antisemitic profile, was, however, not the first attempt to seek cooperation with National Unity. Already in autumn 1933, Gundersen, Clausen, and Fermann had travelled together to Oslo, where they met with the party. The Oslo visit resulted in the decision that Norwegian National Socialists collectively would merge with National Unity, since it was considered the best political option for their agenda in Norway.[84] Back in Germany, however, only Fermann kept his word to Quisling and joined National Unity, while the agreed-upon fusion between the two organisations did not take place. The reasons for this are still unclear. Most likely, Clausen and Gundersen feared that Norwegian National Socialists would lose their position as the "true" Norwegian representative of National Socialism and be overthrown by Fermann.[85] Their fallout with him, however, meant that their organisation lost its most influential member in the fascist milieu.

The next attempt to come to terms with National Unity took place a year later. In October 1934, Gundersen and Clausen met with NNSAP in Oslo. Realising that the organisation, after Egeberg Jr.'s withdrawal, remained as "a party of boys",[86] Quisling was contacted again.[87]

However, an agreement does not seem to have been reached this time either. Again, the reasons remain unclear, but there are several indications that the party was considered too reluctant regarding the so-called Jewish question.[88] All in all, the attempts to establish one united Norwegian National Socialist front failed, with far-reaching consequences for National Unity's foreign policy during the Nazi occupation of Norway.[89]

Shortly after becoming part of the occupation regime due to the "New Order" of Norway on 25 September 1940, National Unity started to re-activate its foreign work in Germany with the establishment of National Unity's Foreign Office.[90] At about the same time, Norwegian National Socialists finally decided to collectively join the party. All activities of Norwegian national socialism in Germany were now to be coordinated by Clausen as country leader. However, as soon as he realised that Fermann would head the overarching foreign office of National Unity from Oslo, he rejected the offer and declared that he would advise all former members of Norwegian National Socialists against cooperating with National Unity.[91] Fellow member Audun Rusten, who replaced him, turned out to be a serious burden to the relationship between National Unity and the Norwegian milieu in Germany due to his aggressive approach and was removed in 1941.[92]

What followed was an intense tug of war between the foreign office of National Unity and former members of Norwegian National Socialists. It both poisoned the atmosphere between the several factions of Norwegian fascists in Germany and hindered the establishment of a successful foreign policy of National Unity.

"True" Representatives of National Socialism

The case of Norwegian National Socialists gives some clear indications regarding their self-image, ambitions, and forms of cooperation, which help to understand the complex picture of Nordic fascism.

As with similar Nordic groups, Norwegian National Socialists never grew large or became particularly visible outside their own political milieu. While Norwegians residing in Germany – in particular in Berlin and Hamburg – clearly were aware of the group, they played no role in Norwegian politics and were most likely unknown in most NSDAP party circles. This made it necessary to prove their political legitimacy through successful networking, particularly with regard to the National Socialist regime. The group members were convinced that their experience in Nazi Germany would naturally make them excellent candidates for cooperation. They felt that they understood the "true" nature of National Socialism and were the most capable of introducing the ideology to Norway. This underscores their role as a pre-collaborative force that scrambled for a leading position among Norwegian national socialists.

This self-concept is hardly surprising as it characterised most groups. However, regarding Norwegian National Socialists, the self-image of being the "true" representative of National Socialism made cooperation with

like-minded groups in Norway difficult. At least, it thwarted the group's fusion with National Unity, which would have required that it accept the role of junior partner. Similar observations can be made regarding Danish and Swedish groups, which failed to merge into one strong fascist movement in their home countries.[93] On the other hand, the perception of a Nordic racial community, and particularly the joint experience of living in Nazi Germany, laid the groundwork for cooperation with other Germany-based Nordic fascist groups, which probably took place without notable conflicts.

Several factors explain these differences regarding networking and ambitions. Nordic fascists in Germany most likely identified first and foremost with German National Socialism, which meant they had a common ideological understanding of how to interpret and approach this movement. On the contrary, fascist groups in Scandinavia and Finland were seeking to develop their own national versions of national socialism, sometimes even in direct opposition to Germany.[94]

Furthermore, there was an ongoing conflict among Nordic fascists, in general, as to who or which group might be the "true" representative of national socialism.[95] Successful networking and reliable contacts with the National Socialist regime were the decisive yardsticks and would prove crucial.

Regarding this point, there seemed to have existed a significant gap between the self-perception of Norwegian National Socialists and the political priorities of the National Socialist hierarchy in Germany. During the negotiations prior to the establishment of the occupation regime in Norway, the organisation did not play any role, and there are no indications that the German authorities showed any interest in involving it. Once the collaboration regime based on National Unity was settled, Norwegian National Socialists did the same as several other prominent Norwegian fascists, which was to try to make the governing of Quisling's party as difficult as possible. This clearly underlines the fragmented character of Nordic fascism.

Notes

1 Hereafter Norwegian National Socialists.
2 Riksarkivet Oslo (RA), L-sak 12686 Salomon [Gunnar] Clausen, Clausen to Quisling, 3 February 1939.
3 Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung;" Emberland and Kott, *Himmlers Norge*.
4 *The Times*, 19 April 1940. Through the BBC, the term was broadcast worldwide and is still used today. The events on 9 April 1940, and the developments in the following months that led to the establishment of a collaboration regime, are described in a number of studies. See e.g., Skodvin, *Striden om okkupasjonsstyret*; Loock, *Quisling, Rosenberg und Terboven*; Dahl, *Vidkun Quisling*.
5 There is a considerable amount of academic works on the Norwegian occupation regime and its aspects. One of the best overviews is provided in Bohn, *Reichskommissariat Norwegen*.
6 Central Bureau of Statistics of Norway, *Norges Offisielle Statistikk*, 11–12.

7 See e.g., Salomon Clausen's letter to Quisling, and the self-image of the so-called *Ragnarok* circle in Norway. RA, L-sak Clausen, Clausen to Quisling, 3 February 1939; Emberland, *Religion og rase*, 261–286.
8 See e.g., Jacobsen, Hans S. "Nasjonalsocialisme og fascisme." *Ragnarok* 6/7, September 1935.
9 Karcher and Lundström, "The Nature of Nordic Fascism."
10 On the *Völkisch* Movement before 1918, see Puschner, *Die völkische Bewegung im wilhelminischen Kaiserreich*; Breuer, *Die Völkischen in Deutschland*; Puschner, Schmitz, and Ulbricht, eds., *Handbuch zur "Völkischen Bewegung."*
11 On the Nordic Movement, see Breuer, "Die 'Nordische Bewegung'," 485–509; Breuer, *Die Nordische Bewegung in der Weimarer Republik*.
12 Karcher, "Schirmorganisation der Nordischen Bewegung," 7–35.
13 Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 60–85. See also Kyllingstad, *Kortskaller og langskaller*, 165–169.
14 See Günther, *Der Nordische Gedanke unter den Deutschen*; on the perception of the Nordic thought, Lutzhöft, *Der Nordische Gedanke in Deutschland*.
15 Christensen and Emberland, "Nordic Heretics." See also Emberland and Kott, *Himmlers Norge*, 77–84.
16 Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 85–95; Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck, 05.4-066, Plan für die künftige Arbeit der Nordischen Gesellschaft [elaborated by Ernst Timm, accepted by the NG board on 12 September 1933], 27 November 1933. See also Lutzhöft, *Der Nordische Gedanke in Deutschland*, 55–56; Hannemann, *Die Freunde im Norden*, 448–451; Almgren, Hecker-Stampehl, and Piper, "Alfred Rosenberg," 18–21; Kuusisto, *Alfred Rosenberg*, 199–202; Jacobsen, *Nationalsozialistische Außenpolitik*, 485.
17 Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 85–97.
18 See among others, Almgren, Hecker-Stampehl, and Piper, "Alfred Rosenberg," 13, 26, 42–42.
19 Loock, *Quisling, Rosenberg und Terboven*, 186.
20 There are few other topics in Norwegian occupation history that had been speculated much about other than these two meetings and their possible consequences. See e.g., Loock, *Quisling, Rosenberg und Terboven*, 226, 243–246; Dahl, *Vidkun. Quisling*, 30, 42–45.
21 See in more detail, Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 118–125.
22 See e.g., the engagement of prominent Norwegians in the Nordic Society, such as the famous writer and Nobel Prize winner Knut Hamsun. Ibid., 97–117.
23 RA, L-sak 24/45 Paul Gudmund Gundersen, dok. 33 [1945], 4–5.
24 See in more detail, Christensen and Emberland, "Nordic Heretics."
25 On NNSAP in detail, see Emberland, *Fra gutterommet til Gestapo.*
26 RA, facsimile: Institut für Zeitgeschichte München (IfZ), Nbg. Dok. PS2205; Emberland, *Fra gutterommet til Gestapo*.
27 In more detail, Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 134–138. See also RA, L-sak Gundersen, Norges Nasjonalsocialistiske Arbeiderparti, dok. 23, 1 September 1933.
28 RA, PA 777 NSUO, Redegjørelse fra sekretær Hartmann i Utenriksdepartementet vedrørende medlemmer av N.N.S.T., Notat i anledning besøk av Gunnar Clausen [April 1947].
29 Compare Emberland, *Fra gutterommet til Gestapo*.
30 RA, L-sak Gundersen, dok. 33 [1945], 2–6.
31 Ibid., 3.
32 "Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Berlin. Har dannet sin egen organisasjon med Paul G. Gundersen som formann." *Arbeideren*, 4 September 1933.

33 "Skandinaviske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland. Skandinaverne i Udlandet vil være Pionerer for den nationalsocialistiske Tankes Sejr i Norden," *Kampen*, July 1933. Thanks to Claus Bundgård Christensen for this source.
34 RA, PA 777 NSUO, box 2, Liste over Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland [undated].
35 On Clausen's position during the process of establishment, see RA, L-sak Clausen, Oslo Politikammer [dok. 19], Landssviksavdelingen [undated]; RA, PA 777 NSUO, box fa-4/Fylkesfører og secretariat, Clausen to Olaf Willy Fermann, 15 March 1941; Fermann to Clausen, 21 November 1940.
36 RA, L-sak 13663 Gunnar Graarud, Egeberg jr. to Gunnar Graarud, 17 July 1933.
37 RA, L-sak 4206/49 Olaf Willy Fermann, box 7, dok. bil. 4: Den norske barmhjertighetsfront under krigen. En dokumentasjon om spillet bak kulissene, av Olaf W. Fermann, February 1959.
38 See in more detail, Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 142, 160–165. On Fermann's role in the SS, Emberland and Kott, *Himmlers Norge*, 209–212.
39 Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 164–166; Karcher, "Nasjonal Samling's Foreign Office," 119–122.
40 See Emberland, *Fra gutterommet til Gestapo*.
41 RA, PA 777 NSUO, box 2, Liste over Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland [undated]. The catalogues of the Riksarkivet [Norway's national archive] state that the card file of Norwegian National Socialists only contains some of the names.
42 See e.g., the statements of the leader of the Norwegian Club in Berlin, Thorvald Heyerdahl, in the summer and autumn 1940. Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum (NHM), 8 I-0009, mappe 13b, korrespondanse vedr. straffesak mot Olaf Willy Fermann, Heyerdahl to Fermann, 21 July 1940; Heyerdahl to Fermann, 26 September 1940.
43 See among others RA, PA 777 NSUO, Redegjørelse fra sekretær Hartmann i Utenriksdepartementet vedrørende medlemmer av N.N.S.T., Notat i anledning besøk av Gunnar Clausen [April 1947].
44 "Skandinaviske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland. Skandinaverne i Udlandet vil være Pionerer for den nationalsocialistiske Tankes Sejr i Norden," *Kampen*, July 1933.
45 On membership in National Unity, see in detail Larsen et al., "Fascism and National Socialism," 595–666.
46 On the latter, see Christensen and Emberland, "Nordic Heretics."
47 See e.g., the leader of the Norwegian so-called *Ragnarok* circle, Hans S. Jacobsen, a successful ship broker, as well as the Danish musician and newspaper correspondent Henning Rechnitzer-Møller, who from 1932 on, played a central role in the Germany chapter of the National Socialist Workers' Party of Denmark. On Jacobsen, see among others, Emberland, *Religion og rase*, 227–310; Emberland and Kott, *Himmlers Norge*, 99–102. On Rechnitzer-Møller, see Lauridsen (ed.), *Føreren har ordet!* 434.
48 This is hardly surprising since a lot of Norwegians had come to Germany to study engineering since the end of the 19th century. See Nerheim, "Deutschland als Vorbild, "115–122; Collett, "Tysk innflytelse," 49–60.
49 RA, PA 777 NSUO, box 2, Liste over Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland [undated].
50 Clausen refers to the attached guidelines in a letter to Quisling. However, these seem not to be preserved. RA, L-sak Clausen, Clausen to Quisling, 3 February 1939.
51 Ibid.

52 See RA, PA 777 NSUO, box fa-4/Fylkesfører og sekretariat, Fermann to Clausen, 21 November 1940, and Fermann to Clausen, 22 April 1941; RA, L-sak Clausen, Clausen to Quisling, 3 February 1939. See also in more detail, Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 152–153.
53 Ibid., 148.
54 Bak et al., "Early Nordic Fascism and Antisemitic Conspiracism."
55 RA, L-sak Clausen, Clausen to Quisling, 3 February 1939.
56 RA, L-sak Clausen, Oslo Politikammer [dok. 2], 8 August 1947.
57 RA, L-sak Fermann, eske 1, dok. 119 [undated], and Norges Nasjonalsocialistiske Arbeiderparti, Ernennung durch Gundersen [dok. 23], 1 September 1933.
58 RA, L-sak 12500 Audun Rusten, Audun Rusten to National Unity's Foreign Office, 3 February 1941.
59 RA, PA 777, eske 22 Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland, Redegjørelse fra sekretær Hartmann i Utenriksdepartementet vedrørende medlemmer av N.N.S.T.: P.M. i anledning "Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland" og J.L. Hagens forhold til denne, 29 April 1947.
60 RA, PA 777, eske 22 Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland, Redegjørelse fra sekretær Hartmann i Utenriksdepartementet vedrørende medlemmer av N.N.S.T.: P.M. i anledning "Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland" og J.L. Hagens forhold til denne, 29 April 1947. On the *Kontrollratsgesetz*, see "Kontrollratsgesetz Nr. 2: Auflösung und Liquidierung der Naziorganisationen vom 10. Oktober 1945." http://www.verfassungen.de/de45-49/kr-gesetz2.htm.
61 RA, PA 777, eske 22 Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland, Redegjørelse fra sekretær Hartmann i Utenriksdepartementet vedrørende medlemmer av N.N.S.T.: P.M. i anledning "Norske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland" og J.L. Hagens forhold til denne, 29 April 1947; "Skandinaviske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland. Skandinaverne i Udlandet vil være Pionerer for den nationalsocialistiske Tankes Sejr i Norden," *Kampen*, July 1933.
62 "Skandinaviske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland. Skandinaverne i Udlandet vil være Pionerer for den nationalsocialistiske Tankes Sejr i Norden," *Kampen*, July 1933.
63 RA, L-sak Rusten, Rusten to NSUO, 15 February 1941.
64 On the *Welt-Dienst*, see in more detail, Brechtken, "Madagaskar für die Juden," 43–53; Plass, "Der Welt-Dienst," 503–522.
65 Finkenberger, "Ulrich Fleischhauer," 235–236.
66 Hagemeister, Michael, "Georg de Pottere," 649–650.
67 Bollmus, *Das Amt Rosenberg und seine Gegner*, 121–122.
68 See e.g., *Ekko. Verdens-speilet*, 15 November 1935; *Ekko. Verdens-speilet*, December 1935. Thanks to Terje Emberland for these sources.
69 RA, L-sak Rusten, Rustens beretning om Lunde-aftenen i Berlin, 22 March 1941.
70 Staatsbibliothek Berlin. SBB StaBiKat – results/titledata. John T. Lauridsen could also document the activities of Danish *Welt-Dienst* co-worker Curt Carlis Hansen on behalf of the journal, which among other things resulted in 1935 in the publication of the radical antisemitic journal *Die Fackel*, later *Der Norden*, directed mainly towards the Danish minority in Northern Germany. Even so, this undertaking was partly supported by the *Welt-Dienst*, it must not be confused with the official Danish edition from 1940 onwards. Lauridsen, "'… Et uhyre vindende væsen …'," 193–195. See also Bak, *Dansk Antisemitisme*, 108, 117, 469.
71 RA, L-sak Rusten, Rustens beretning om Lunde-aftenen i Berlin, 22 March 1941.
72 Emberland, *Fra gutterommet til Gestapo*.

73 Lööw, *Hakkorset och wasakärven*, 92. See also Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige*, 108–109.
74 RA, L-sak Rusten, Rusten til NSUO, 15 February 1941.
75 Lööw, *Hakkorset och wasakärven*, 81. See also Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige*, 108.
76 "Tyskerne avsetter lederen for de svenske nazister! Og utroper en annen i hans sted. Hvad et svensk høireblad avslører," *Arbeider-Avisen*, 28 August 1933.
77 Christensen and Emberland. "Nordic Heretics."
78 Emberland, *Fra gutterommet til Gestapo*. See also Lauridsen (ed.), *Føreren har ordet!*, 435.
79 "Skandinaviske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland. Skandinaverne i Udlandet vil være Pionerer for den nationalsocialistiske Tankes Sejr i Norden," *Kampen*, July 1933.
80 See more on this in Christensen and Emberland. "Nordic Heretics."
81 "Skandinaviske Nasjonalsocialister i Tyskland. Skandinaverne i Udlandet vil være Pionerer for den nationalsocialistiske Tankes Sejr i Norden," *Kampen*, July 1933.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
84 RA, PA 777, eske fa-4/Fylkesfører og sekretariat, Fermann to Clausen, 22 April 1941.
85 RA, PA 777, eske fa-4/Fylkesfører og sekretariat, Clausen to Fermann, 15 March 1941, and Fermann to Clausen, 21 November 1940.
86 RA, L-sak Gundersen, dok. 33 [undated], 4.
87 Ibid.
88 RA, L-sak Rusten, Rusten, to NSUO, 13 January 1941; RA, PA 777, Riksøkonomiadeling, Jens Gjerløv to National Unity, 22 December 1942.
89 See in more detail, Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 156–158.
90 On the foreign work of National Unity in Germany, see Karcher, "Nasjonal Samling's Foreign Office," 117–140.
91 RA, L-sak Rusten, Interrogation Stein Barth Heyerdahl, Rapport Oslo Politikammer, 1 March 1948; RA, PA 777, eske fa-4/Fylkesfører og sekretariat, Fermann to Clausen, 28 October 1940; Clausen to Fermann, 5 November 1940; Clausen to Fermann, 26 November 1940.
92 RA, L-sak Rusten, Rusten to NSUO, 13 January 1941; Rusten to NSUO, 6 June 1941; Rapport til Oslo Politikammer [dok. 21], 16 March 1948; interrogation Stein Barth Heyerdahl, Rapport Oslo Politikammer, 1 March 1948; Ernst Züchner to Rusten, 3 June 1941.
93 Compare e.g., Lauridsen, *Dansk nazisme*; Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige*; Wennberg, "Ideological Incorrectness."
94 On this, see e.g., Christensen and Emberland. "Nordic Heretics."
95 Compare e.g., Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige*, Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 267–299.

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3 A Pragmatic Revolutionary

R. Erik Serlachius and Fascist Visions of Society and Community

Oula Silvennoinen

This chapter is a political biography of R. Erik Serlachius (1901–1980), a Swedish-speaking Finnish paper, pulp and timber industrialist, influencer, and politician among the political right. The active career of R. Erik Serlachius (he would use the initial R., denoting the name Ralph, only in formal connections) spanned the decades from the late 1920s until the 1970s. In its course, he assumed many stances – from a hard-liner manager of paper mills in his father's group of companies, to an economic supporter of the fascist Lapua Movement [*Lapuan Liike*] in the early 1930s, and on to the post-war emergence of a committedly anti-communist, but essentially moderate right-wing politician. When he finally, in the 1950s, accepted a post as a cabinet minister, he did so as an established figure of the moderate right in Finland, whom even his political opponents would not accuse of radicalism.

My aim is to sketch out the contours of Erik Serlachius' political development and thinking to illuminate the many reasons one might have found the interwar authoritarian or fascist movements and their revolutionary visions of society appealing. The central argument is that Serlachius was never committed to fascism as such – he was never a member of the Lapua Movement or any other discernibly fascist organisation – and from his vast correspondence, one looks in vain for the recognizably fascist terminology or ideas. In fact, his surviving paper trail, albeit massive, betrays a man who well into his adulthood appears little interested in politics at all. Yet, in practice, he, for a time, alongside many of his contemporary peers, clearly and demonstrably went much further, and this article is an attempt to explain why.

The chapter aims to be an analysis of the phenomenon of the fellow-traveller on a level of a single individual, as well as a detailed look into the mechanisms which produced support for interwar fascist movements. There would seem to be ample source material for such an endeavour, as the vast collection of his correspondence, speeches, and reminiscences is at a historian's disposal. The difficulty lies in sifting from the sources that which is not directly stated and put in writing, that invisible but organic part of the past, which, in the words of the Swedish historian Niklas Stenlås, "is never visible in formally proclaimed strategies of industrial organisations".[1]

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Erik Serlachius lived his life in a distinctly Nordic, cosmopolitan, and transnational world. His identity was defined by language, inherited socioeconomic standing, multinational familial ties, and the extensive networks of class and profession he was raised into. His family roots had, for generations, been solidly buried in the Swedish-speaking coastal areas and towns of Finland. His father, Gösta Serlachius, had married his own cousin from the industrialist branch of the Serlachius family, and in time come into possession of the family business, the mechanical pulp and kraft paper mills of *G. A. Serlachius Ab.*

As was typical of the forestry branch in Finland, the owners, managers, and engineers running the plants were almost exclusively recruited from Swedish-speaking families. They would lord over the inland mills and factories where locally recruited Finnish-speaking workers toiled in 12-hour shifts. That presented a not-so-subtle day-to-day lesson of the way language and culture determined social hierarchies. Serlachius grew between the influence of his fiercely Suecomanian[2] father and the almost-entirely Finnish-speaking environment, which shaped him into an effortlessly bilingual adult who later in life displayed little passion for the language strife.

As was also typical, G. A. Serlachius Ab was – despite its physical location in central Finland's backwaters in what can arguably be characterised as European periphery – a thoroughly transnational affair. The reason was that it was an export company, which sold most of its products to buyers abroad. If one aimed to work in any leadership position, one had to be fluent in many other languages than Swedish and Finnish: Russian, English, German, and French. Narrow-minded nationalism would have been difficult to fit into a lifestyle where Manchester and St. Petersburg were at least as relevant as Helsinki and Stockholm, where daily correspondence with sales agents abroad had to be conducted in several different business languages, and where holidays typically were spent in France.

Serlachius' position as the heir apparent of a multinational company facilitated a distinctly cosmopolitan lifestyle in an era where most of his compatriots led much more restricted, monolingual, and cultural lives. The very exceptionality of his position underscores the fact that he was tightly entangled in a network of supranational influences, loyalties, and dependences. His native language made him a member of a linguistic club spanning two countries and giving easy access to two more; his socioeconomic status resembled the transnational community of the nobility of earlier centuries, and his involvement in export trade bound him to a multinational network of customers, sales agents, contractors and subcontractors, competitors, and colleagues.

Few examples would underscore these interdependences better than one of Serlachius' last letters written from his final sickbed in 1980 to the Swedish industrial giant Marcus Wallenberg (1899–1982) of *Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken*. Serlachius expressed regret that he had to cancel his participation in a joint pheasant-hunting expedition in Sweden. The ties that

bound were many, as Wallenberg was much involved in Finnish industrial life, like Serlachius was a personal friend of Finland's President Urho Kekkonen, and like Serlachius had been awarded the Finnish honorary title of a *bergsråd*.[3]

Keen inter-Nordic co-operation between the industrialists within the forestry branch, aided by a common language and shared cultural norms, ensured that there was ample opportunity for intellectual cross-breeding and free flow of ideas. The so-called Scan-cartels would be the central fora for inter-Nordic producer co-operation and socialising within the lavish yearly meetings hosted by one of the members in their turn. No expenses were spared when the industrialists impressed their Nordic colleagues with grand dinners, imported foodstuffs, tours in their factories, and general sightseeing.[4]

Cartelisation within the Nordic – that is, Swedish, Norwegian, and Finnish – forestry industries began already in 1918 with the formation of the first Swedish-Finnish timber export cartels "to secure mutual price policy". This first attempt at a comprehensive cartel came to grief in 1921 amid the price pressures of the catastrophic post-war recession of the early 1920s. A renewed wave of inter-Nordic forestry cartels took off in the mid-1920s as the producers again found a common interest in limiting "harmful" mutual competition. The 1930s then became the golden age of inter-Nordic price cartels, with the producers forming several organisations each to kraft-, greaseproof- and newsprint as well as pulp and cardboard.[5]

Yet, the peculiarities of Finland's 20th-century history would often set Serlachius apart from his Nordic colleagues. While ideas might easily cross-national borders, assessments of the general situation necessarily did not. Finnish industrialists in general were during the 1920s and 1930s more eager for battle, more determined to perceive the left as an existential threat and more interested in methods already tried and abandoned by their Swedish colleagues. Throughout the 1930s, the Finnish industrialists would rarely sway from the hard-line that was already being abandoned particularly in Sweden.[6]

A Political Coming of Age

Erik Serlachius' childhood came to an end in 1912, when he moved away from home to a boarding school in Helsinki. This was the first step in the road his father had staked out for his son. Serlachius would achieve all the necessary knowledge and technical skills to one day take over the family business. The planned education included much practice abroad to learn all the vital trade languages and cultural skills one would need.

But politics intervened in a fateful way as Serlachius was getting ready to take his final exams. During his last school years, the world war had been driving the Russian empire ever closer to disintegration. Finland declared its independence following the Bolshevik coup, in December 1917. The future

course of the new country was contested, however, and fundamental differences between the Finnish Social Democrats and non-socialists had manifested themselves already during the run-up to independence.

As a less than trustworthy part of the Russian Empire, Finland had no armed forces, and as law enforcement crumbled, its place was taken by paramilitaries run both by the Social Democrats – the Red Guards – and the non-socialist bloc of the Civic Guards, also called White Guards. The names already tell of the influence of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Russian Civil War, then about to enter its decisive phase, to events in Finland.

The deterioration of trust was ultimately total and resulted in a civil war fought in the first months of 1918. The Red Guards began their attempt at a revolution in Finland on 27 January 1918, by taking over key buildings and sites in Helsinki. The Whites simultaneously began their own project of taking political control by disarming the remaining Russian garrisons in their stronghold, Bothnia. Within days, a front line running across Finland took shape: southernmost regions with their major towns and centres of industry were to become the powerbase for the Reds, the vastly larger northern parts of the country the base for the Whites.

During the subsequent winter months, the Whites gradually gained the upper hand. Their eventual victory could be anticipated after the early April conquest of Tampere [Swe. Tammerfors], a major industrial centre, and in many ways the spiritual capital of the Reds. Almost simultaneously, German troops invaded southern Finland, driving all the way to Helsinki, which they captured before mid-April. This meant liberation to the Whites in the city, including Erik Serlachius, who suddenly turned from a fugitive into a vanquisher.

The 17-year-old schoolboy had spent the months under Red power hiding in the Helsinki town flat of the family together with his mother. The worst fear had been a forced mobilisation into the Red Guards. After the Germans entered the city, Serlachius as well was drafted into the Civic Guards. Manpower was sorely needed to secure the city and to keep watch over the scores of capitulated, captured, and suspected Reds. They were now being herded into makeshift prison camps to await trial and punishment, or simply as a way of exacting quick revenge.

As is common in civil wars, the other side is never just an enemy, but also a traitor. Particularly in the conditions of surging, fierce nationalism Finland had been experiencing since the late 19th century, the Reds represented an ultimate betrayal of the sacred cause of a united Finnish nation. All in all, almost 20,000 Red or suspected Red prisoners lost their lives as victims of a war-time or post-war purge – shootings, executions, disease, and starvation in prison camps – inflicted by the victors on the vanquished.[7]

Serlachius was soon in service guarding Red prisoners in a prison camp within the walls of the 18th-century sea fortress Sveaborg, located on islands just off modern Helsinki. From the ramparts, he could look down to the misery and squalor accompanying the defeated. Men were turned into

walking skeletons from hunger. They would scavenge for whatever edible they could find, in ragged, dirty clothes, many with just a tin mug hanging from their belts serving as a dinner plate, mug, and utensils. The prisoners craved for anything drinkable to satiate their raving thirst caused by the heavily salted, meagre prison fare, some would pick their anuses with a stick in the full view of their guards in an attempt to relieve the constant, unbearable constipation caused by the miserable diet. Death was present on the camp every day – from disease, hunger, and executioner's bullets.[8]

Serlachius never spoke of his experience, nor of the emotions it may have aroused in him. His writings and recorded public utterances have not a single reference, nor reflection, to this experience. Witnessing scenes like that do not necessarily produce the emotional response one might at first assume, that of pity and compassion towards the suffering of others. Quite on the contrary, such experiences may well produce increased hostility towards the victims in their miserable condition – as if their very dirtiness and degradation was proof of their morally corrupt nature. Had not the White press and propaganda been claiming this all along? Was not squalor the natural state of the beasts in human form?[9]

For the young man who in January 1918 lived through the most consequential phase of his life so far, the experience can hardly have been anything but profound. The silence afterwards is so deep one may suspect several reasons behind it. Post-Civil-War Finland remained a country divided against itself. With mistrust and hostility poisoning the relations of former Reds and Whites well into the future, the civil war became the most important background event also explaining the development of the political thinking of men like R. Erik Serlachius.

His military service was soon over, anyway, and he spent the years 1919–1922 as a student in Dresden, Germany. The Technical University College [*Technische Hochschule Dresden*] was a famed and liberal institution that had allowed female students already in 1910. At the same time, the Technical University College had a sound renown as a school for the elite. Sons of Germany's major industrial families and foreign dignitaries were well represented among the students. The upper-class elitism was available in a distilled form in the Academic Sporting Club [*Akademische Sportverein*], a club for the well-to-do if any. Serlachius soon got himself elected head of the organising committee for festivities. The position called for liberal use of his own money to entertain the sophisticated clientele, of which his financially hard-pressed father at home was less than happy about.

A few glimpses into the political mindset of young Serlachius are available from this time. In April 1921, a group of Finnish students climbed the mountain *Staffelstein* to commemorate the third anniversary of the White capture of Helsinki in 1918. This is entirely unsurprising for someone with his background, but in August 1921, in a letter home he made a more untypical remark of current German events. The subject was the recent murder of vice-chancellor Matthias Erzberger, whom members of the far-right murder

squad *Organisation Consul* had gunned down while Erzberger had been taking a walk. "It was a good thing they shot him", Serlachius would explain to his father, "as [Erzberger was] one of those who've damaged Germany the most".[10]

The remark probably reflects the attitudes common among the German upper-class students of the Technical University College. Erzberger had made himself hated by the right as the head of the German armistice delegation in 1918, and later through his tax policies, which punished the wealthy. Another source of influence on young Serlachius could have been his most important adult contact and helper in Dresden, the germanised Norwegian Albert Viljam Hagelin. Hagelin had originally come to Dresden in 1900 to study architecture but soon found himself a more lucrative career as an opera singer and businessman. He had by 1919 married a wealthy heiress of a coffee import company, started a small factory producing cardboard boxes, and become a dealer in fine arts.

Serlachius became a subtenant of the Hagelins in Dresden and spent much of his free time with the couple. Correspondence between Albert Viljam Hagelin and Gösta Serlachius has not been preserved, and we cannot be quite certain as to how exactly Erik Serlachius and Albert Viljam Hagelin were brought together. The most likely connection is through Gösta Serlachius, an avid collector of Finnish and European fine arts, paintings, and sculpture, who may have come to know Albert Viljam Hagelin either through his status as a cardboard manufacturer or as an art dealer.[11]

Be that as it may, by the mid-1930s, Hagelin had nevertheless come to fully embrace the National Socialist ideology. He returned briefly to Norway in 1935 and immediately formed a connection to Vidkun Quisling's party National Unity [*Nasjonal Samling*, NS]. Hagelin's career as an enabler of the NSDAP in designs concerning Norway was crowned by the post of Minister of the Interior in Quisling's collaborationist government, a part for which he was finally executed for treason in 1946.[12]

The influence Hagelin may or may not have had on the young Serlachius living his formative years must, for lack of sources, remain an open question. Contact to the Hagelins seems to have been broken after Serlachius in 1922 left Germany for France. As a detail, it is nevertheless necessary to mention, as it describes a prominent feature of the social sphere Serlachius lived in, as well as the cosmopolitan lifestyle where transnational contacts came naturally.

From his extensive Grand Tour including studies in Germany and France, and a period as a business intern in the United States and Canada, R. Erik Serlachius returned to Finland in 1927. Ahead of him was his first independent post as a manager of one of the paper mills of the family conglomerate. By that time, a lot had happened in the homeland. Serlachius was thrust into a gathering intellectual and political turbulence of the late 1920s, ultimately ushering in a renewed effort to defeat socialism and the trades unions. With it, he became involved with new ideas and initiatives.[13]

The Quest for the White Worker

As the 1920s began to draw to a close, the time seemed to be rapidly ripening for a revolution in employer-employee relations, the job market and the trades unions. Gösta Serlachius had already in 1918 proclaimed that his post-civil-war policy for his own mills would be to create "a new, healthy generation of workers". This did not mean physical health. It would mean the raising of an entirely new type of man: a factory worker whose political outlook would align itself with that of the employers, a loyal worker weaned from socialism, trades unionism, and attempts to wield mass power. In short, a White worker, who had to be found, educated, organised, empowered, and set to lead his peers into a bright future.[14]

Gösta Serlachius, and Erik Serlachius in his tow, were not alone in their quest. Similar ideas were widely shared among the post-civil-war Finnish industry captains. The victorious conclusion of the civil war had seemed to offer an opportunity for a new beginning. The post-civil-war White terror could be understood as a harsh but necessary precondition with which the most obstinate opinion leaders among the workers were rooted out. The time to sow new seed into a remade earthly garden would come only after the snakes had been driven away with fire and iron. Post-1918 Finnish society would thus be a clean slate, upon which a new world freed from the false doctrines of socialism and class struggle could be built. The terror may have been unsightly, but had it not prepared the ground for a rebirth, a *palingenesis*, among the Finnish workforce?

The attempt to get at the root of the evil that had caused the civil war, and the long-term quest for pliant trades unions, led the industrialists quite naturally at corporatist ideas. Without them being overtly conscious of it, they were riding a transnational wave. The corporatist tendency, which bloomed in the interwar era European politics, had its origins in 19th-century European conservatives "disenchanted with liberalism and fearful of socialism and democracy". An important conduit was the Catholic Church, the top clergy of which were fascinated by intellectual efforts to find a third way between rapacious industrial capitalism and the threat of socialism. But most visibly corporatist ideas in post-world-war Europe were advertised by the rhetoric and apparent success of Mussolini's Fascist regime in Italy.[15]

Yet, corporatism among the industrialists remained instinctive, and its theoretical underpinnings unstudied. Mussolini and his *Carta del Lavoro*, António de Oliveira Salazar's *Estado Novo* in Portugal, Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal in the United States, and even the five-year plans of Stalin's Soviet Union attracted the attention and admiration of some, but it would be a stretch to argue they were keenly studied among the industrialist circles. Even among the right-wing nationalist students, the most ardent explorers of interwar nationalist and fascist thought, they were hailed more as symbols of a new era than objects of serious study.

Still in 1939, the yearbook of the ultra-nationalist Academic Karelia-Society [*Akateeminen Karjala-Seura*] could sum the penetrating power of continental corporatist theory in Finland with one sentence:

> Of the social, economic, and governmental idea known under the name corporatism no general work as of yet exists in the Finnish language.[16]

There were, however, many pathways all leading to the same destination. Another natural route to corporatist initiatives lay in the interwar concept of entrepreneurship – *Unternehmertum*, as it was known in the German-speaking world. Swedish and Finnish industrial leaders were well familiar with ideas of unlimited and unhindered rights of owners and managers to lead their businesses as they saw fit. To this ideal, the trade unionist methods of collective bargaining and the socialists' underlying refusal to acknowledge the right of the capitalist to enjoy the fruits of capital investment fit most uneasily. The socialist trade unions could thus never be a true partner in the labour market. They would be grudgingly tolerated for now, but mercilessly crushed should the opportunity to present itself.[17]

The ideological key ingredient was the concept of freedom of work [*arbetets frihet*]. In the interpretation of the factory owners, this tended to mean exclusively the right of the workers to enter individual contracts between themselves and the factory management, and liberty to work at all times under the terms set by such contracts – without outside obstruction or harassment from organised labour. A strike in this interpretation was the very culmination of such obstruction. Strikes were enabled by unionisation, collective bargaining, and collective agreements. For the industrialists, strikes appeared as the root causes for disruptions of production and as the first steps towards socialism. White workers therefore would shun the trades unions and hold freedom of work as their dearest possession.[18]

To break socialism, then, strikes should be broken down and with them the collective power of trade unions. There was thus a direct line running from the concept of "arbetets frihet" to the founding of a country-wide strike-breaker organisation also for Finland in 1920. Erik's father, Gösta, again was a key instigator. The result was *Yhtymä Vientirauha – Konsortiet Exportfreden*. The showdown came in the summer of 1928 when the communist-led longshoremen's union began a long-planned strike, and the industrialists retaliated by calling in their strike-breakers. The result was an abject defeat for the workers and seemed to point towards the way the communists and the socialist trades unions could be crushed altogether.[19]

As a concept, strikebreaking was nothing new. Its origins lay in the United States, where a commercialised strike-breaking industry had by the early 1900s become a routine resort for industrialists to break up strike movements and, in consequence, unionising attempts among the workforce. Also in Sweden, strikebreaking organisations had been in existence since the late 19th century. Their heyday in Sweden began to be over by the end of

the 1920s. But in Finland, the struggle had barely been joined. *Exportfreden* reached its high-water mark in the mid-1930s when it boasted having the names of 34,000 potential strike-breakers in its rolls. For a time, it also seriously considered transforming itself into a political party, the Union for Freedom of Work [*Työvapauden Liitto – Arbetsfrihets Förbund*].[20]

In the final years of the 1920s, an opening for a renewed round of White revolution seemed to present itself. Bringing on the awaited upheaval in employer-employee relations had proven to be a rocky road, and the White worker had so far, without help from the employer organisations, refused to step up. Instead, the Moscow-led and financed communists were resurgent and doing battle with the social democrats for overall control of the trade unions. As an infuriating symbol of the subjugation of the Whites of 1918 on the factory floor, rumours were circulating on the widespread presence of "work-site terror". This meant harassment, humiliation, and violence by left-wing trades-unionists towards the minority of unaffiliated workers who had fought for the Whites in 1918.[21]

A sense of violated entitlement proved to be a powerful motivating factor for a far-right mass movement. In late 1929, the moral outrage raised by an engineered clash with communist youth in the town of Lapua provided the necessary detonator. The ground had been prepared well in advance. Throughout the closing years of the decade, White veterans of the civil war had begun to form associations to fight what they perceived as a creeping revolution to undo the achievements and values the Whites had fought for in 1918. Industrialists were tightly involved in the creation of a "spontaneous" mass movement around the core of veteran mobilisation. To maximize its appeal, the core message was distilled into a single, simple demand: communism in all its forms would have to be eradicated from Finland. This would achieve what was described as the central aim of the 1918 White front. It would bring the civil war to a close and make a national rebirth into harmony and greatness finally possible.[22]

The paper and pulp magnate Rafael Haarla, known as something like a maverick among his peers and notorious for his union-busting methods imported from the United States, sat in the original executive committee of the Lapua Movement already as it was forming. Other trade and industry leaders soon followed suit. In the spring of 1930, in anticipation of decisive demonstrations of the movement's rising strength, a circle of influential business leaders was gathered to take care of financing the "people's movement". Erik Serlachius' father Gösta would become a member together with his colleague, friend, and occasional rival, the general and industrialist Rudolf Walden.[23]

In the eyes of the industrialists, the Lapua Movement was primarily a tool to bring about the demise of the socialist trade unions. But the essence of the movement could be found in the modern concept of a culture war. The movement described itself in terms of a "Christian and moral front", which had risen to turn back the tide of Bolshevism, directed from Moscow.

This formed the key to the broad appeal of Lapua: the denominator of anti-communism enjoyed effortless acceptance among all those who saw themselves as descendants of the White Movement for Finland's independence and the civil war in 1918 and supporters of the White cause thereafter. In practice, this made every non-socialist a potential supporter. The central question in the ensuing culture war would be the heritage of the Finnish Civil War of 1918, and the spiritual ownership of the country.[24]

By early 1931, the Lapua Movement had passed its heyday and ceased to be a popular power capable of exerting extraparliamentary pressure on the state and its administration. It remained as a continuously radicalising outfit within which secret plots against the republic were hatched until the so-called "Mäntsälä uprising" of 1932, an ill-conceived attempt at a coup by the Civic Guards, marred by too much spontaneity and liquor to have a real chance of success.

The failure of the coup ensured the further isolation of remaining Lapua supporters from the Finnish political mainstream. In due course, it also resulted to the disbandment of the movement and its transformation into a regular political party, Patriotic Movement [*Isänmaallinen Kansanliike*] in 1932. By that time, the industrialist backers had abandoned both the original movement and its new incarnation and turned their eyes towards a vision of achieving a revolution in job market relations through their own strength. To this new round of battle, Serlachius would throw himself with alacrity.[25]

Reading for the Right

Despite the weakening of the Lapua Movement, the 1930s turned out to be the heyday of managerial power over the employees across Finnish industries. In the early years of the decade, the Great Recession bit also the forestry branch in Finland deep enough. Wages were cut across the board in the conditions of an oversupply of labour. Organised employer strike-breaking and the haphazard violence of the Lapua Movement had done their part in emasculating the trades unions, which were further weakened by the ongoing struggle between the social democrats and communists for control.

As the worker's movement was evidently in disarray, it was time for the employers to tighten their grip. A number of competing, White worker's unions were set up across the country. They were designed to attract the workers in corporatist spirit into non-confrontational unions, which instead of striking would cooperate with the management. For his part, Erik Serlachius closely supported the local chapter of one White union in the Mänttä mills, heart of the family concern now under his leadership.[26]

Despite the weakness of the left, the attempt to draw their members into the White organisations turned out to be a resounding failure, as the White unions were widely perceived among the workers as creatures of the management. Serlachius, too, must soon have had doubts towards the whole

enterprise. He had already for some time been aware of the limited ability of White trade unions to compete with their more experienced counterparts, as he had in 1929 admitted in a letter to his father:

> I gave permission [to organise an evening entertainment event of the White union], but it turned no profit, quite the opposite, a little loss, mainly because of bad arrangements. They had only one accordion, and no buffet or the like, which would have attracted people. I have agreed with Viitanen that they will not arrange this kind of events before summer, and then we will have to draw up the program together.[27]

White worker's unions however were nevertheless just another tool in what developed into an almost decade-long full-frontal assault against the trade unions and the left by the industrialists. Propaganda was another way to break the spell cast by the socialists over the working people. There was a widespread agreement among the industrialists that their workers needed to be weaned away from Marxist doctrines, and the medium through which to do this would primarily be the newspapers.

The system, as it came to be, rested on a number of politically aligned local newspapers, which were offered to the workers for subscription at a reduced price. The reduced subscription prices would conspicuously be below the subscription rates of competing socialist or otherwise politically less desirable papers. The price reduction in turn was made possible by subsidies paid by the mill owners directly to the newspapers. As a return favour, the papers would run articles drawn up by the paid writers of the major forestry industries employer organisation, *Träförädlingsindustrins Centralförbund*. In this bargain, the papers got, apart from cold cash, a widened circulation over their competitors. The workers got cheap newspapers with educating content. Everybody gained.[28]

And if such subtle massaging of minds through well-written newspaper stories would not suffice, there were still other methods. Industrial espionage was a tried and tested union-busting tactic, developed in the United States. It involved having agents of the management among the workforce to spy and report on them. In the Mänttä pulp and paper mills under Serlachius' leadership, the system was developed to its apex. The main office kept a register, where each worker was given a political assessment and categorised according to their political leanings and awareness, from "politically reliable worker" all the way down to "less desirables" and those "dangerous to the maintenance of industrial peace".[29]

The 1930s progressed under the guidance of industrial managers, in conditions of weakened trade unions, countrywide and centrally directed strike-breaking, subsidised newspaper propaganda and industrial espionage and political suppression of communists. The far-right in Finland was organised into one parliamentary party and numerous, short-lived, bickering far-right organisations whose ideological self-label changed from fascism into

National Socialism after Hitler's accession to power in Germany in 1933. With the economy recovering from the recession, also the left-wing trade unions began to display signs of recovery, but throughout the decade the industrialists enjoyed hitherto unprecedented freedom of action.

The clearest indicators of Erik Serlachius' politically calculating mindset in the late 1930s are to be found in his involvement in the presidential election and his reading list. Both indicate a man who is moving away from the radical far-right – if he ever really had truly walked in its ranks. One indication of his intellectual development can be found from his reading list, which in the late 1930s came to include *Svensk Botten*, a fortnightly newspaper for the Swedish-speaking right-wing, from the far-right to conservative moderates. Most probably on initiative of Serlachius' father, the subscription list was circulated among the management of the G. A. Serlachius Ab, and the exclusively Swedish-speaking engineers and clerks, Serlachius included, duly signed on.

Svensk Botten came out from 1937 until 1944. Originally, it was to serve as a mouthpiece of the right-wing of the Swedish People's Party [*Svenska Folkpartiet*], a moderate non-socialist outfit seeking to unite the Swedish-speakers and act as the guarantor of their interests in Finland. Such a setup guaranteed that the membership at large was a mixed crowd. The party included several non-socialist liberals, whereas the illiberal right-wing of the party came to be an amalgam of conservative right, far-right, and fascist positions.

It was particularly noteworthy that the paper grew out of a radicalised background. Many of its founding members and active contributors were men with experience of the Finnish independence movement or the World War or were members of the second generation raised in the shadow of the mythical heroism of independence activists, striving to be like them. The second generation, like the first editor Torsten G. Aminoff, was throughout the early 20th century conspicuously represented in the *Aktiva Studentförbundet*, a radical-nationalist student organisation.

Under Aminoff the paper maintained a decidedly conservative right-wing tone. It would side with Franco in the Spanish Civil War, express scepticism towards "horror-stories" flowing out from Hitler's Germany ("Rövarhistorierna om Tyskland") and displayed antisemitism typical of the age in many of its articles. The paper also employed as regular contributors members of Swedish-speaking radical-nationalist and fascist intellectual and cultural circle, like the fascist poets Bertel Gripenberg and Örnulf Tigerstedt, or the professor of history Jarl Gallén. One of the most ideologically clearheaded and committed Finnish national socialists, Johan Christian Fabritius, regularly advertised his engineering consultancy services in the pages of *Svensk Botten*.[30]

A week after, the *Kristallnacht* pogroms in Germany, *Svensk Botten* laid out its line regarding National Socialist Jewish policies in an editorial. The text, undoubtedly penned by Aminoff, went through the usual national

socialist motions in explaining antisemitism. According to the paper, animus towards the Jews was explainable by history, and understandable, even partially justified, as Jews enjoyed a disproportionately dominant position in German society.[31] That the experience of the Weimar Republic had accentuated feelings of historical antipathy towards the Jews. And that after Hitler's accession to power it was the hate-propaganda of émigré and international Jewry, directed against Germany from abroad, which had served to further aggravate the situation.[32]

According to *Svensk Botten*, violence had erupted only after repeated provocation, and the Jews were largely themselves to blame. While the "measures" [*åtgärdena*] could not be accepted, they could well be understood. Nevertheless, the paper went on to blame Hitler's government for "robbing the Jews of their means of livelihood". The violence had only served to raise joy in Germany's enemies and sorrow in its friends. Pogroms were an unseemly feature in an otherwise valued ally. *Svensk Botten* positioned itself squarely in the same camp with Hitler and Franco:

> All those who strive for the unification of all the powers aiming to elevate and preserve society in Europe, in defence of Western culture and the Western form of society, have had to see their task made significantly more difficult by a state, which nevertheless should be playing a decisive role in this task.[33]

Overall, the tone of *Svensk Botten* remained comparatively civil. Antisemitism on its pages was casual, and not outside the bounds of propriety typical of the age. While the paper was staunchly anti-communist and no stranger to conspiracy beliefs of Jewish overrepresentation in the Soviet system, the paper displayed few examples of hysterical, demonising language and neologisms typical to the far-right. *Svensk Botten* was a newspaper for those Swedish-speaking Finns who saw society starkly divided between the "bourgeois parties" and "Marxist parties", and who knew which side they were on. Language tended nevertheless to be guarded so that the paper could attract and maintain readers of all shades of non-socialist, anti-communist Swedish-speaking folk. And its outlook was decidedly Nordic, as *Svensk Botten* kept a close eye, particularly on political affairs in Sweden.

The line of *Svensk Botten* towards the, during the 1930s, accentuated language strife in Finland was single-mindedly and staunchly pro-Swedish. Serlachius' father shared this outlook, but Serlachius himself developed a notably moderate stance towards the language issue. He came from a Finnish-speaking environment but developed into an effortlessly bi-lingual individual who was at ease with either language, and who throughout his life displayed little interest in linguistical zealotry. For Serlachius, the true danger did not come from the Finnish-speakers, nor from the revolutionary far-right, but from the political left. As its line, *Svensk Botten* called for a strict upholding of democracy and the rule of law, although with a decidedly

authoritarian bent: "The times call for a strong and responsible man in the helm of the state". Serlachius would have agreed: the strong and responsible man would be the President P.E. Svinhufvud, for whose re-election in 1937 he would campaign in person.[34]

By now, Svinhufvud was the candidate of the moderate right, the National Coalition Party [*Samlingspartiet*], and the darling of the entire political right, from the moderates all the way to the most radical. His credentials as a professional judge and a fearless opponent of the pre-1917 imperial Russification policies were beyond reproach. As a senator of the right, and as chief of the White government during the civil war in 1918, Svinhufvud had come to embody the White Finland, but his background as a constitutional lawyer gave his career a fundamentally lawful foundation. This, as if through a backdoor, made himself and many of his admirers implicit champions of the rule of law, even if other items on the agenda would be those of the far-right. His authority even among the most radical was such that he had seemingly singlehandedly in 1932 ended the Civic Guards' Mäntsälä uprising through a radioed call to the rebellious guardsmen to lay down their arms. Late in life, the strongly Germanophile Svinhufvud would slide into ever-more pronounced sympathy with Nazi Germany, in the final war, years turning into a virtual mouthpiece of German propaganda. But in 1937, that was still in the future.[35]

By the late 1930s, the world seemed to be marching towards increasing unrest, perhaps a cataclysmic showdown between communism and the "powers to elevate and preserve society". The readers of *Svensk Botten* knew without hesitation whom they would choose in a choice between Stalin and Hitler. Serlachius was no exception. One of the major figures of the Finnish moderate right, J.K. Paasikivi, in a private letter to a right-wing political influencer in 1938, encapsulated not just the bleak options, but also the preference many in Finland would agree with:

> I heard you are going to Germany for Hitler's 50th birthday. That's a good thing. We, too, need to be "realpolitiker", which means that should this policy of neutrality [of Finland] come to nought, we'll be brought under the heel of either the Bolsheviks or the Germans. And the latter is the better option, even if it's not nice either.[36]

The Attaché

Erik Serlachius' world slid into confusion with the escalation of the European geopolitical crisis in late 1939. One by one, the mainstays of the family business were knocked out. In rapid succession, the politically unthinkable began to appear, not only possible, but desirable as well. The signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in August 1939 made war suddenly a likely prospect. It was quickly understood in Finland that an *entente* between

Germany and the Soviet Union would lead to a weakening of the international position of everyone else. German assault upon Poland in September caused alarm among the international paper market, with shipping lanes between Finland and Great Britain in a new kind of peril and freight insurance premiums shooting through the roof. Poland was quickly dissected by Germany and the Soviet Union.

Serlachius was no soldier, having flunked his national service after falling into icy seawater in an exercise in 1923 and contracting pleurisy. But he was an industrialist with a command of the German language and access to a wide network of contacts in the country. Thus, as the crisis leading to the first Soviet-Finnish war intensified in the final months of 1939, Finland mobilised its leading industrialists into service in a desperate bid to buy whatever war materiel would be available anywhere in Europe. Serlachius was thus sent to Berlin to organise purchases and shipments of war materials to Finland from across Europe. While he shuttled hard at work between Berlin and Trelleborg, the implications of the German-Soviet treaty materialised also for Finland. In the early morning hours of the last day of November 1939, the Red Army poured over the Finnish-Soviet border.[37]

As Finland now was at war, Erik Serlachius' efforts took on an increasingly desperate tone. Throughout this first Soviet-Finnish war, Germany was a rude host. Despite Serlachius' contacts to the topmost echelons of Nazi hierarchy, Germany was officially an ally of the Soviet Union. Hitler would soon forbid sales of arms to Finland and put up all kinds of barriers to other kinds of effective aid.

Through official routes, it could not be done, but Hitler's Germany was a structurally corrupt state, where other avenues were always available. Through the arms merchant, Colonel Josef Veltjens, Serlachius had a channel all the way to the supposedly favourable ear of the *Generalfeldmarschall* Hermann Göring himself. Yet, most crucial arms shipments were delayed or left lying in German ports. The Hungarian anti-aircraft guns were left to rot in Berlin, the Italian Fiat fighter planes sold by the sympathetic government of Mussolini were stopped in their crates in the harbour of Sassnitz. They reached Finland only after the war had ended.[38]

Yet, Serlachius managed to keep up a trickle of useful war material by making purchases through ostensible partners from countries like Hungary: steel for grenade shells, louse combs and thermometers, a batch of flare gun ammunition. Dealing with men like Veltjens must have taught him one thing: despite official policy, or even the directives of Hitler himself, there were always channels through which things could be made to happen. Serlachius could often circumvent Germany's official cold stance and Hitler's express orders by dealing with Veltjens and his associates. They, in turn, made money under Göring's protection by circumventing German official policy. Germany was a country where few things were allowed, but most things were possible to arrange.

Serlachius' relationship to Hitler's Germany would develop on the side, during his long, intermittent stay in the country until late 1942. After peace was concluded between Finland and the Soviet Union in March 1940, Serlachius would stay in Berlin to arrange the numerous tasks brought on by the outbreak of peace: the freights stopped in Germany during the war would now have to be expedited safely home. Soon Serlachius was also arranging the repatriation of Finnish sailors, ships, and cargoes, caught by surprise in Danish and Norwegian ports by the German assault in April 1940.[39]

At the same time, the attitude of Hitler's regime towards the Finns was visibly changing. Serlachius was suddenly issued with eight times the normal amount of rationing cards, and the regime put a lavish Berlin flat at his disposal. It was no secret, as Serlachius would later admit, that "the Jewish family which used to live there had been deported".[40]

Where, Serlachius would not know or would not say. Overall, in his correspondence and later reminiscences he made few remarks regarding the Nazi state and policy. Direct criticism of them was even rarer. He cannot but have encountered the many implications of, for instance, Nazi policy towards the Jews in everyday life, newspapers and radio, regime propaganda, speculations, rumours, jokes, speeches, and discussions with politicians, businessmen as well as with both German and foreign diplomats. He would live in an Aryanised flat vacated by a "deported" Jewish family and would work aided by his secretary, a former Pole deemed racially fit to be Germanised. It was his job to listen, pay attention, and analyse what he saw and heard. After a brief stay at home, he was again sent to Berlin in the spring of 1941, as a new war was already on the horizon. This time he was given an intelligence role: alongside his normal duties of procurement, he would be charged by a mission to draw up evaluations of Germany's war potential. It was his job to know and understand.[41]

Yet, he rarely gave glimpses of his innermost thoughts. In a revealing letter to his father in July 1941, he was full of enthusiasm towards Germany's position in the war, and the decision Finland had made by joining the German assault into the Soviet Union:

> I absolutely think we have hopped into the right boat, even if it would have been nicer if we hadn't had to sever our ties to England.[42]

The younger Serlachius had for the moment clearly shed whatever misgivings he may have had towards Hitler and his regime. This was no mean thing, as he cannot be described as having been any kind of enthusiast towards the Third Reich, either. Expressions of antisemitism in his correspondence were casual and occasional, not outside the bounds of contemporary norms of civility.

England was another difficult part, as it had for decades formed a major export market for the products of Serlachius' forestry conglomerate:

paper, pulp, and sawn timber. Erik Serlachius father Gösta was a lifelong Anglophile, having been struck by the might and affluence of the British Empire already as an intern in Manchester in 1900. Thereafter, business interests had continued to mould the politics of the Serlachius family, and the ties to the United Kingdom grew ever closer, down to the English wife of Erik Serlachius' younger brother Bror. It was to London the already elderly cardiac patient Gösta Serlachius had been sent to in December 1939, to gather whatever support would be available for Finland, then fighting for its existence. It was even harder for the father than for the son to swing from the family tradition. To Serlachius senior, Hitler was, still in May 1940, "a madman", and the simultaneous German advances to induce Finland into a continental, German-dominated economic system a recipe for "slavery".[43]

But hard realities were bound to make both the father and son to change their minds. By 1942, the older Serlachius was pondering the territorial adjustments and annexations he felt were bound to follow from the war. Like many in Finland, he was eyeing the forest reserves of Soviet Karelia and the Kola peninsula, as well as an expanded access to North Atlantic via the ports in Norwegian Finnmark:

> We should now have an opportunity to take all the Norwegian lands between the Finnish border and the Atlantic. It is the Germans, after all, who can give them to us.[44]

While the father was indulging in expansionist daydreaming, disillusionment had crept into the letters of his son, who was still posted in the capital of the Greater German Reich. "What to my mind is alarming", he wrote home in February 1942,

> is the fact that the German civilian administration (=party politics) does not at all understand how the occupied lands should be governed. […] As soon as the military administration was replaced by the civilian one [meaning the establishment of the *Reichskommissariats* of *Ostland* and *Ukraine* in autumn 1941] all the rights were taken from the populations, and they have been treated very badly anyway. When one thinks that the population on the hitherto conquered territories exceeds that of Greater Germany, one must treat the future with reservations, no matter how the war will end.[45]

The Arbiter

Erik Serlachius did not stay in Germany until the end of the war but managed instead to get himself recalled in September 1942. His father was by that time ailing and died in October. Serlachius was left to take care of the family paper, pulp, and timber conglomerate, and to plan for the inevitable

future. In 1943, after the conclusion of the battle of Stalingrad, a widely shared consensus developed rapidly among the Finnish military, political and economic elite: Germany would lose the war, and Finland would have to start to seek a way out before it was too late.[46]

Serlachius again displayed his mental flexibility. Neither his correspondence, nor any other recorded utterances, betray signs of hard-line attachment to Germany or attempts to cling to hopes of an eventual German victory. The industries would have to be accommodated to the inevitable switch from a war economy to normalising conditions. This would not be easy, as Finland would be forced to severe its war-time economic dependence on Germany and would need new markets and imports to keep its population fed and its industry rolling.

Much of the necessary measures to this were not in the hands of industry captains, but in those of soldiers, politicians, and diplomats. Serlachius took care of his mills and factories and implemented locally policies in which there was by a now shared consensus among most industry leaders. The antagonistic and confrontational style in labour market politics of the 1930s would have to go. Employers would not anymore seek to suppress the labour unions by relying on strike-breaker organisations, by fostering "White" labour unions, and by subsidised newspaper propaganda aimed at the workers. Least of all, they would no longer rely on industrial espionage or fascist organisations to effect country-wide policy changes or mobilise the working population.

Much of this would also be forced upon the employers, as the terms of the Finnish-Soviet armistice in September 1944 called for immediate and wide-ranging political and societal changes in Finland. According to its paragraphs, all fascist organisations were to be disbanded forthwith. An Allied Control Commission, formally consisting of representatives of all Allied powers, but in practice utterly dominated by the Soviet Union and headed by Andrey Zhdanov, considered by many to be Stalin's second-in-command, arrived in Finland to oversee the fulfilment of the armistice agreement.

In the fearful political climate, the Finns rather erred on the side of caution and disbanded every organisation that even faintly smacked of fascism. Among the real fascist organisations and parties, such as the numerous but diminutive Finnish national socialist parties and the pro-National Socialist and pro-German umbrella organisation Finnish Union of the Realm [*Suomen Valtakunnan Liitto*], also the decidedly non-socialist, but much less ideologically radical and much more influential civic guards, as well as the women's auxiliary defence organisation *Lotta Svärd* had to go.

The terms also meant that the communists could return to political life without fear. They did so, with vehemence. In early October 1944, together with the left-wing of the Social Democrats, they set up the People's Democratic League of Finland [Fin. *Suomen Kansan Demokraattinen Liitto*, Swe.

Demokratiska Förbundet för Finlands Folk], a mass party that swept into a dramatic electoral success in the first post-war parliamentary elections in March 1945. Soon also the Finnish Communist Party, forced underground during the war years and throughout the interwar period led from Moscow, returned to the political stage.

It was characteristic of both the pace of the upheaval and of the nimbleness of Serlachius that he was soon, in November 1944, campaigning to be included in the board of his local chapter of the friendship association Finnish-Soviet Society. It might soon be dangerous if he were perceived as someone who would be lukewarm towards the newly found friendship between Finland and the Soviet Union.

From late 1944 onwards, Serlachius also took an active role as a conciliating employer. Among his own mills, he would actively foster a climate of new-found mutual respect between the management and labour. His reasons, widely shared among his fellow industrialists, can be gleaned from his public speeches and correspondence. The idea was to limit the impact of the demobilisation in circumstances of widespread shortages of even basic goods and amenities, soften the effects of setting the Finnish war-time economy into a peace-time footing, and curtail the influence of the Soviet Union and the far left in Finnish politics and society. All these lines of action were aimed at a single outcome: to prevent widespread disturbances of production.

Henceforth, the employers would acknowledge the trade unions dominated by parties of the left as legitimate partners and would negotiate with them on comprehensive collective agreements. The decision transformed the Finnish society and ushered in an era of reconciliation between the mainstream right and left parties as well as state-facilitated comprehensive job market settlements, which has continued to the present.

Serlachius' post-war career and essence were thus staked out. He would reinvent himself into a staunchly pro-Western patriot, who would entertain British and American ambassadors and maintain a keen relationship particularly with the United States. His only foray to politics would be his service as a secretary for public works and traffic in the caretaker government of Sakari Tuomioja in 1953–1954. After this stint in governing, he would go on to build a relationship with the steadily rising politician Urho Kekkonen that would last through Kekkonen's presidency for the rest of Serlachius' life.[47]

Perhaps the most salient feature in his thinking was the nimble and multifaceted readjustment of his instinctive, deep-rooted anti-communism into the post-war environment. This manifested itself in various ways. First of them was Serlachius' effortless abandonment of the coercive and manipulative labour and job market policies which had been common to the industry throughout the interwar period. No more strike-breakers, industrial espionage, blacklists, newspaper propaganda, sweet deals, and other union-busting exercises. The interwar quest for the mythical White

worker was finally abandoned overnight. In the new society, socialists, communists, and trades, unionists had to be, not just tolerated, but also collaborated with.

Another manifestation was more spiritual in nature. By the beginning of the 1950s, Serlachius had been introduced to the principles of Moral Re-Armament (MRA). The international movement had its roots in American Protestant revivalism. Led by the preacher Frank Buchman, MRA had been gaining support particularly in Great Britain since the late 1930s. The ideological core of MRA was an attempt to provide, in Buchman's words, "an alternative to corruption, communism and war". Its task was nothing less than the reformation of human nature and human societies through reconciliation and abandonment of social and political struggle, all ultimately facilitated by the transformative power of the love of Christ.[48]

MRA was another example of the ease with which cultural impulses crossed national borders and barriers of language. The immediate post-war decades saw it spread all across the West. It found an eager reception also in Finland, where its core text, the novel *Ideas Have Legs* by Peter Howard, a British journalist, was translated into Finnish in 1948.

MRA tied its adherents, like Serlachius, into a transnational community of non-socialist, indeterminately Christian, bourgeois idealists set to replace sources of social division with wellsprings of harmony. The concept of class struggle was a very antithesis to MRA's vision of lions and lambs finally coming to an understanding, and socialism and communism therefore natural antagonists. Such aims would quite understandably make an impact on many of those who during the preceding decades had sought the keys to social tranquillity and industrial peace in fascism and corporatism. Once again, a path to social harmony, and the birth of a new man to inhabit a Heavenly Kingdom upon earth, seemed to be within reach.

If anything, Serlachius' post-war career showed he would not budge from his core policies, even if they had to be pursued in forms altered almost beyond recognition. His final, long-term contribution to Finnish anti-communist activism was his presidency of the trust called Support of the Finnish Society [Fin. *Suomalaisen Yhteiskunnan Tuki*, Swe. *Finland's Samhällsskydd*]. Founded in the summer of 1952, Serlachius presided over its constitutive meeting and would henceforth chair the central delegation. That summer, Finland was hosting the Olympic games in Helsinki, and almost through with its war reparations to the Soviet Union. Fear of Stalin and the Soviet Union were momentarily receding, and there was a definitive air of greater daring and liberty. From now on, organisations like the new trust could proactively support efforts to keep the communists out of power and Finland resistant to Soviet encroachment.

The Finnish Society was both an expression of the continuous struggle for Finland's position in the emerging Cold War world, as well as of the passing of the most acute sense of imminent peril during the final phase of Stalinism. It was also a pointer to the influence Finnish communism in

reality was enjoying within the society. The communists were turning into a good enemy, mighty enough to warrant continuous watchfulness, but feeble enough that measures for their marginalisation could safely be pursued. This the Finnish Society would do, by financing research and grants, gathering and disseminating information, as well as propaganda, to hinder the spread of communism. Funding would come from businesses and employer's organisations. Serlachius, with his extensive contacts, would be a key person to ensure that monetary contributions kept flowing in.[49]

However, the struggle was anything but over. Finnish position remained ambiguous until the final collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Prevented from openly siding with the West or becoming a member in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, Finland remained vulnerable to Soviet political and economic penetration, and the Finnish domestic politics a battlefield of the soul of the nation.

Serlachius would not see the era to its end. He died in October 1980 as a result of an internal haemorrhage, left too long undetected and untreated. In his political life, he had been a man of many faces but had never yielded his central principles. In his political alliances, however, he had been consistently ready to show opportunism. Like many of his peers, his interest in, and support for, authoritarian and fascist movements of the age was dictated by pragmatic and utilitarian considerations, not ideology or fundamentally illiberal convictions. Allies like the Lapua Movement, or Nazi Germany, were good allies as long as they got the job done. If they did not, there was no reason to stand by them any further.

Moreover, for Serlachius, the ultimate cause could never be deduced from a philosophical or ideological position. Instead, the cause was always derived from the economic interest of the family conglomerate he had been raised and educated to manage from the day he was born. A greater, more binding cause there could never be. Even anti-communism, otherwise a salient constant in his political thinking, was subordinate to this principle. It, too, flowed from the underlying simple arithmetic of always seeking to minimise the sources of disturbance to production. Anyone who would have hoped to find in him an ideological companion would eventually have been frustrated by these entirely practical fundaments of his political philosophy.

The political life of R. Erik Serlachius is a tale of a Nordic and European contemporary in the age of fascism. He comes out as a one-time fellow traveller who never appears to have internalised any of the ideological tenets of fascism, nor shed a single tear to mourn the passing of the fascist era. While the Lapua Movement for a time had looked like a promising partner to further a common interest, it ultimately could not get the job done. The tool had not worked, and thus it was discarded and replaced by another. The aim and the struggle were constant; the means could vary.

People like him nevertheless fulfilled an essential role for all aspiring fascist and far-right movements, as they all needed to secure mass support wider than the base of ideologically conscious old fighters of the movement.

To be successful, all such movements needed to be able to draw in influential sectors of society, who in turn could be convinced of the essential justification of fascist policies through appeals to some salient, non-negotiable political and social themes. Time and again, general appeals to anticommunism, anti-unionism, nationalism, and authoritarianism were key. They would create the sense that fascist movements essentially were a conservative force, aimed at countering revolutionary socialism and preserving the social order and hierarchies vital to the safeguarding of economic self-interest.

The British historian of National Socialism Richard J. Evans notes in his essay on another "minor and marginal" fellow traveller, the German businessman Alfred Toepfer, that his mental setup was one where business and ideology went hand-in-hand. As long as the business was good, he was not overly bothered by the excesses of National Socialism, which he anyway saw as being broadly on the right track. For Toepfer, this basic orientation welled from his intellectual background in early 20th-century German nationalism. A similar remark can be made for Serlachius. His background, upbringing, family values and experiences contained much that was easy to align with contemporary far-right and fascist ideologies and movements, but, just as with Toepfer, as "closely related and overlapping […] they may have been, they were not identical".[50]

Notes

1 Stenlås, *Den inre kretsen,* 12.
2 The terms Suecomanian and Fennomanian referred to the opposite camps in the strife for Finland's linguistic identity, waged with alternating intensity from the mid-19th century until the Second World War. The Suecomanians were proponents of the view that Swedish should remain the only, or at least hegemonic, official language in the country.
3 SM (Serlachius Museums), R. Erik Serlachius, Correspondence 1980, R. Erik Serlachius to Marcus Wallenberg, Mänttä, 27 August 1980.
4 Silvennoinen, *Savunharmaa eminenssi*, 185–186.
5 Kuorelahti, "Boon, Depression and Cartelization," 45–68; Karlsson, *Egenintresse eller samhällsintresse?*, 53, 60.
6 Stenlås, *Den inre kretsen*, 68–69; Norrmén, *Politiska essäer*, 101.
7 http://vesta.narc.fi/cgi-bin/db2www/sotasurmaetusivu/stat2.
8 Nieminen, *Helsinki ensimmäisessä maailmansodassa*, 300–316.
9 Vannas, *Silmä silmästä*, 32–33.
10 SM, Gösta Serlachius, Correspondence 1921, R. Erik Serlachius to Gösta Serlachius, Dresden 20 April 1921; R. Erik Serlachius to Gösta Serlachius, Dresden, 30 August 1921.
11 Silvennoinen, *Savunharmaa eminenssi*, 47–48.
12 Dahl, "Albert Viljam Hagelin." See also Hagelin's treason trial files, Riksarkivet Oslo (RA), L-sak 846 Albert Viljam Hagelin.
13 Siironen, *Valkoiset*, 151–153.
14 Häggman, *Metsän tasavalta,* 18; Silvennoinen, *Pappershjärtat*, 350.
15 Costa Pinto, "Corporatism and 'organic representation' in European dictatorships," 4–5.

16 Kontio, "Korporatismin perusajatuksia," 149–150.
17 Bergholm, *Finlands Fackförbunds Centralorganisations historia*, 17.
18 Flink, *Strejkbryteriet och arbetets frihet*, 18.
19 Bergholm, *Finlands Fackförbunds Centralorganisations historia*, 25.
20 Smith, *From Blackjacks to Briefcases*, 40–41, 81–82; Flink, *Strejkbryteriet och arbetets frihet*, 19; Silvennoinen, *Pappershjärtat*, 361–364.
21 Bergholm, *Finlands Fackförbunds Centralorganisations historia*, 19, 25.
22 Siltala, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset*, 45; Siironen, *Valkoiset*, 162–164.
23 As a classic example of a "sweet deal", Haarla paid 10 per cent higher wages to those of his workers who agreed not to join the unions and be available for work in the event of a strike. Silvennoinen, *Savunharmaa eminenssi*, 109.
24 Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 35–39; Somersalo *Lapuan tie*, 107.
25 Siironen, *Valkoiset*, 170–174.
26 Silvennoinen, *Savunharmaa eminenssi*, 110–111.
27 SM, Gösta Serlachius, Correspondence 1929, R. Erik Serlachius to Gösta Serlachius, Mänttä, 14 May 1929.
28 Silvennoinen, *Pappershjärtat*, 388–391.
29 Silvennoinen, *Savunharmaa eminenssi*, 158–159.
30 *Svensk Botten* 1/1937, 12 May 1937, "Vår uppgift"; *Svensk Botten* 45/1938, 18 November 1938, "Tidningsankorna"; *Svensk Botten* 3/1939, 20 January 1939, "Franco har ordet".
31 Compare also with Karcher's chapter "National Socialisms in Clinch" in this volume.
32 *Svensk Botten* 45/1938, 18 November 1938, "Judeförföljelserna".
33 Ibid.
34 *Svensk Botten* 1/1937, 12 May 1937.
35 Silvennoinen, "Kumpujen yöhön – eli kuinka historiallinen muisti vääristyi," 58–60.
36 TUY (Turku University Library), K. N. Rantakarin kokoelma, 1.1 Saapuneet kirjeet, J. K. Paasikivi to K. N. Rantakari, Stockholm, 9 April 1939.
37 SM, R. Erik Serlachius, Correspondence, Pekka Huhtaniemi to R. Erik Serlachius, Helsinki, 11 November 1975.
38 Ibid; Evans, *The Third Reich in History and Memory*, 216–217.
39 SM, R. Erik Serlachius, Correspondence, Pekka Huhtaniemi to R. Erik Serlachius, Helsinki, 11 November 1975.
40 Ibid.
41 SM, R. Erik Serlachius, Correspondence, Pekka Huhtaniemi to R. Erik Serlachius, Helsinki, 11 November 1975; Evans, *The Third Reich in History and Memory*, 214–215.
42 SM, Gösta Serlachius, Correspondence 1941, R. Erik Serlachius to Gösta Serlachius, Berlin, 24 July 1941.
43 SM, Gösta Serlachius, Correspondence 1940, Gösta Serlachius to Ernst R. Behrend, Mänttä, 15 May 1940, and to Risto Ryti, Helsinki, 28 May 1940.
44 SM, Gösta Serlachius, Correspondence 1941, Gösta Serlachius to R. Erik Serlachius, Mänttä, 11 December 1941.
45 SM, R. Erik Serlachius, Correspondence, R. Erik Serlachius to Gösta Serlachius, Berlin, 8 February 1942.
46 Silvennoinen, *Pappershjärtat*, 486–487.
47 Silvennoinen, *Savunharmaa eminenssi*, 218–220.
48 Vesikansa, *Salainen sisällissota*, 195–196.
49 Vesikansa, *Salainen sisällissota*, 134–136.
50 Evans, *The Third Reich in History and Memory*, 235, 219.

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4 Nordic Heretics

A National Socialist Opposition in Norway and Denmark

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From the establishment of the first movements in the late 1920s and all through the following decade and the years of German occupation, Norwegian and Danish fascism was characterised by a significant degree of ideological diversity and organisational discord. In this chapter, we will focus on some national socialist milieus and smaller parties that tried to develop a *Nordic* version of National Socialism to counteract the widespread perception of it being an alien phenomenon imported from Germany.

Typically, these groups predominantly consisted of young activists who stood in opposition to the leadership of the larger National Socialist Workers' Party of Denmark [*Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Arbejderparti*, DNSAP] and the Norwegian National Unity [*Nasjonal Samling*, NS], which they regarded as ignorant of the racial-revolutionary spirit of national socialism. At the same time, they criticised these parties for uncritically importing what they perceived as the "external forms" of German National Socialism instead of developing an independent version grounded in the specific history, culture, and racial qualities of the Danish and Norwegian peoples.

Ironically, this effort was to a large degree initiated and encouraged by Heinrich Himmler and the SS. During the occupation, however, this attempt at ideological and political independence led to an increasingly strained relationship with Nazi Germany, and several members of these groups ended up in outright resistance to the occupier and the collaborationist parties.

This will highlight some of the diversity and complexity of Nordic fascism. It also poses a theoretical question: since the variety of conflicting interpretations is so great, is it possible to use the term *national socialism* in anything other than a generic sense?

Educated and Encouraged by the SS

Some of these national socialists in Denmark and Norway became acquainted with the *Nordic Idea* already in the early 1930s. It is telling that this was on the direct initiative from Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler himself.

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In 1929, Himmler became leader of the SS, which at that time was a small unit dedicated to the protection of the public meetings of the NSDAP and wholly under the control of SA, the party's *Sturmabteilung*. However, Himmler immediately began turning his organisation into an independent elite formation of fanatical "political soldiers". Under the influence of Hans F.K. Günther, racial ideologue of the Nordic Movement in Germany, Himmler had become an ardent supporter of the Nordic racial idea. For him, National Socialism was not a German but a pan-Nordic movement sprung from this noble racial blood. The consequence was that his future Utopia was not a strong and expanded Germany but the creation of a Greater Germanic Reich, which encompassed all peoples of predominantly Nordic race. Here, Scandinavians, by virtue of their racial purity and largely unpolluted Germanic cultural heritage, would play a central role. Himmler believed that the Greater Germanic Reich was not to be realised through German military occupation but through an independent "racial awakening" of these countries leading to their voluntary unification with Germany and other racially kindred nations in this new empire. The first step on the road to its realisation was to recruit a core of SS-loyal supporters in these countries. Himmler was not yet 30 years old when he became Reichsführer-SS. He therefore regarded his organisation as the representative of a new "uncompromising generation" of young racial revolutionaries. Consequently, he also wanted to recruit and educate young Scandinavians who would later be part of the governing elite in the Greater Germanic Reich.[1]

To find suitable young candidates, Himmler had to approach Scandinavians who belonged to Hans F.K. Günther's Nordic network. This group consisted of race researchers, such as Herman Lundborg in Sweden and Halfdan Bryn and Jon Alfred Mjøen in Norway, as well as fascist activists. In Denmark, the invitation was sent to the journalist and teacher Ejnar Vaaben. He is called "Denmark's first national socialist", since he was present in Munich during Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch in 1923. Here, he became acquainted with Hans F.K. Günther who in turn introduced him to Himmler. Vaaben became later active in the organisation Nordic Ring [*Nordischer Ring*], where Günther was the undisputed major ideologist, and he also created Denmark's first National Socialist organisation in 1928.[2]

In March 1931, Vaaben wrote to Himmler asking him to send information on the SS. It would be far better, Himmler replied, if Vaaben "could send one or more comrades to Munich for a month to be instructed in all aspects of the SS, so they could become really well-trained helpers".[3] At that time, the SS was planning its first leadership course in Munich in spring the following year, and it was of great symbolic value to Himmler if "racial brothers" from Scandinavia attended. Vaaben had a candidate at hand – namely, his friend and later brother-in-law, Poul Sommer. He was 21 years old and particularly suitable since he had learned German while working as a volunteer at a machine factory in Stuttgart the previous year and had become fascinated with the emerging National Socialist Movement.[4]

Himmler's invitation to the Norwegians was sent to the publisher, architect, and property owner Eugen Nielsen. He was an early fascist and antisemite who first encountered National Socialism through Hitler's supporter Erich Ludendorff, a general of First World War renown and participator in Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch.[5] Nielsen suggested his 23-year-old collaborator, Adolf Egeberg Jr., as a suitable candidate.[6] Egeberg Jr. had become a fervent fascist when he, as a journalist, covered the Lapua Movement's march into Helsinki in 1930.[7] Shortly afterwards, and under the influence of Nielsen, he gravitated towards German National Socialism.

During the course in Munich, Sommer and Egeberg Jr. were instructed in the pan-Germanic and Nordic racial ideas and in organising and propagating National Socialism. At the end of the course, they met both Hitler and Himmler, who encouraged them to start the "racial awakening" of the Danish and Norwegian people by forming National Socialist cadre organisations.[8]

Such contact with the higher echelons of the SS became crucial not only for Sommer and Egeberg Jr. but also for all Danes and Norwegians who subsequently tried to develop an independent Nordic version of National Socialism. In the SS, they found – or perceived to find – both ideological and organisational support for such political goals.

Norway's National Socialist Labour Party

Back in Norway, Adolf Egeberg Jr. established his party in the autumn of 1932, ultimately named Norway's National Socialist Labour Party [*Norges Nasjonalsosialistiske Arbeiderparti*, NNSAP]. This party had a youthful and militant style, adhering to what the members regarded as a true "socialist" and racial revolutionary line. For Egeberg Jr. and his young followers, it was vital to portray National Socialism as a pan-Nordic movement, transcending traditional nationalism. Already in the second issue of the party newspaper *Fronten*, it was stated under the heading "the Nordic idea" that the Germanic peoples "have formed their own worldview and pursued their own cultural development" since ancient times. However, this was now in danger of extinction due to the influence of cultural Bolshevism and racial bastardisation, though this threat had also given hope because it had "welded the Germanic tribes together" in the National Socialist Movement.[9] At the same time, the NNSAP wanted to present its ideology as something that sprang out of a particular Norwegian tradition. "Norwegian national socialism is in line with our old history, and builds on its foundations", the party stated.[10] Even so, the style and propaganda of the NNSAP were largely copied from the German model, which was used by their opponents to brand the party as a foreign import alien to Norwegian sentiments. The NNSAP protested. "We have other things to do than to copy the German Hitler-movement", the party stated in *Fronten*. "Our program and ideas are more Norwegian, more unique to our country than any program of class-struggle. Why? Because

we are building on solid national ground and are at the same in tune with the times".[11] A few years later, the NNSAP went even further in emphasising the national origin of its ideology. "The fact that hardship and danger have matured the national socialist movement to victory in Germany does not mean that National Socialism is particularly German", it read in their new periodical *Nasjonalsocialisten*. "It is primarily Nordic and Norse in its philosophy. It is therefore far more Norwegian than German".[12] The underlying argument is that National Socialism sprang directly from the inborn racial qualities of the Nordic race and its culture, and this has been preserved most untainted among Norwegians and their Norse traditions. To underpin their "Nordic" independence, the NNSAP distributed pamphlets and books written by their Danish allies, such as *Under hagekorset* by Poul Sommer and *Hagekorset over Tyskland* by Ejnar Vaaben.

Nevertheless, it was obviously not the NNSAP's "Norwegianness" that made it popular among a good number of high school students but that it was an exponent of "the national revolution" taking place in Germany. In this generation of youngsters, dissatisfaction with the dire social conditions during the depression led to an increased orientation towards the political extremes. This made the NNSAP appealing among frustrated conservative students as a fresh and radical alternative to both the established "system parties" and the communist youth organisations. New members joined, and several local chapters were formed in Oslo's high schools. The party also gradually established local branches throughout the country. It is difficult to estimate the exact membership figure, but in 1932 and 1933, the NNSAP may have had in excess of 500 card-carrying members and a few thousand sympathisers.[13] This was obviously not enough to create any real political impact. However, by positioning themselves as the most active opponents of left-wing high school students, the NNSAP exerted for a few years a significant influence on a generation of youngsters.

In the spring of 1933, several key members of the NNSAP participated in the negotiations leading up to the founding of National Unity [*Nasjonal Samling*, NS], and many of them chose thereafter to consecrate their activities in this party. National Unity was led by the former Minister of Defence and front figure of Norwegian right-wing activism, Major Vidkun Quisling. Therefore, it seemed to be in a better position to lead the "racial awakening" of the Norwegians. However, from the very beginning, National Unity consisted of various factions, spanning from racial revolutionary national socialists, via fascist and right-wing authoritarians, to conservative Christians. Therefore, the party did not want to label itself as National Socialist. This frustrated the young radicals. Some still chose to uphold their membership in National Unity, where they constituted a radical faction, particularly within the paramilitary wing, the *Hird*. Others regarded Quisling as far too indecisive and conventionally conservative. Hence, they chose to continue their activities in the NNSAP. However, both groups sought to push National Unity in a clearer National Socialist direction.

The desertion of key activists to the Quisling movement ultimately had a detrimental effect on the NNSAP. At the same time, these activists broke with their main financial supporter, Eugen Nielsen,[14] which depleted party funds. Within a few years, the NNSAP went from being a vital youth party with a growing membership and relatively broad sympathy among high school students to becoming an increasingly marginalised and radicalised political sect. The activity now turned away from party building to engaging in violent clashes with political opponents and putting up antisemitic posters. Some also resolved to pure criminality, including blackmail attempts on Jewish businessmen – obviously inspired by the activities of Wilfred Petersen in Denmark. An extortion attempt was committed in Bergen by Karsten Haarvig, who belonged to the local NNSAP milieu. In the daily press, this was immediately linked to the blackmail attempts that Wilfred Petersen's group had committed in Copenhagen at the same time.[15]

Ragnarok

When the NNSAP became marginalised by the mid-1930s, the radical National Socialist and "Nordic" opposition to National Unity became concentrated in the milieu of the periodical *Ragnarok*, edited by the economist and shipbroker Hans S. Jacobsen. This consisted partly of young artists and writers with a background in the NNSAP – among them, not only Adolf Egeberg Jr. but also older lawyers and businessmen who had gained their formative political experience as students in Germany during the rise of the Hitler movement.

The journal was established as a direct result of the ideological conflicts that existed within National Unity. While the bourgeois-Christian wing regarded the party as a national revival against godless Marxism, class struggle, and the spiritual decay of modernity, the radical wing wanted the party to spearhead a National Socialist revolution in Norway. During the first two years of National Unity's existence, this wing lost the battle for hegemony in the party. In particular, it was their anti-Christian "Norse" neo-paganism and their radical racial ideology that was met with opposition by the Christian wing.[16] This led Jacobsen and a number of former NNSAP members to resign, while others chose to stay to run opposition activities from within.

In 1935, Jacobsen founded *Ragnarok* as the mouthpiece for the opposition, both inside and outside National Unity. The inner circle consisted of about 20 people, but their sphere of influence was far larger – as a circulation of 3000 copies per issue indicates. Eventually, the editorial milieu also received an influx from several disillusioned and excluded National Unity members after the conflicts within the party between Quisling and the party's second in command, Johan B. Hjort, in 1936 and 1937.[17] This circle around *Ragnarok* developed a more consistent thinking, aiming at creating an independent Nordic National Socialism.[18]

Radical National Socialism

The *Ragnarok* circle may be called radical National Socialist, since they wanted a fundamental change in the social, political, cultural, and religious makeup of Norwegian society, where racial thinking should constitute the guiding principle. The uniqueness of the Nordic race was to determine the cultural, religious, and political organisation of society. The circle wanted culture to be cleansed of all "racially alien" ideas, Christianity replaced by a modernised Norse paganism and a socialist society that is steered through governmental economic plans with extensive public welfare schemes to strengthen the "racial unity" of Norwegians across class divisions.[19]

The version of National Socialism that they developed was, as they saw it, not at all a German import. Rather, it combined this Nordicist racial radicalism with an ecstatic-religious veneration to the "Norwegian tribe" and its unique features. These "Old Norse" traits separated Norwegians from not only members of other races but also from their German racial kinsmen. Their concept of race was not purely biological. They emphasised that the scientific notion of race was not sufficient. Rather, the main aspect was the spiritual qualities linked to the Nordic race. As Jacobsen wrote in a comment to Hans F.K. Günther's ideas, race is "state of mind, an attitude to life, a soul, as well as a purely physical problem".[20] Like Günther, they regarded race as a kind of formative principle – a *Gestaltidee* – which manifests itself both through biology, history, and culture and which is more or less perfectly expressed in the individuals within a particular people. Race is constantly evolving; it can grow in nobility and purity or become bastardised and begin to degenerate mentally and physically. The way forward was, therefore, through cultural and political means to rekindle racial awareness. The goal was to release the inner forces of the racial soul and thereby trigger a radical revolution.

Such a concept of race is not only metaphysical but also very ambiguous and flexible. The criteria for racial nobility became more cultural than biological, which gave a great deal of room for interpretation. The Germanic people, who in politics, morals, culture, and religion meet the requirements of the "true and primordial Nordic", are also racially the most noble. Such elastic racial criteria can also easily be transformed according to changed political circumstances.

When one considers racial belonging to be the determining factor, this will have consequences for the perception of the nation-state. In the *Ragnarok* circle, the notion of the biological and spiritual kinship of all Germanics led to the idea of a close political union of all Germanic peoples. Unlike the conventional nationalists, they did not perceive the nation-state of Norway as something given but as a historically created entity. All states are man-made and time-bound, while race is primary and given. However, the fact that the formation of a state in Norway is historically dependent does not mean that Norway is a historical-political

construction. The sense of community between Norwegians is not based on a common identification with the state of Norway but on an inherent, racially determined tribal consciousness, which has been shaped through the millennia and therefore existed long before the establishment of the nation-state.[21]

National Socialist Anti-Fascism

For the *Ragnarok* circle, the pan-Germania of the future was not identical with the German Empire. Admittedly, Germany was the leading Nordic-Germanic state, but that did not mean that the country could force Germanic unity on the other Germanic tribes by means of imperialist expansionism. This unity had to spring from the independent will of the different tribes – it had to grow organically from below, not forced from above.

This anti-imperialist attitude is also evident in their critique of Italian Fascism. The brutal imperialist war "the Roman Imperator Mussolini" waged in Ethiopia was a natural consequence of this universalism, they concluded.[22] Fascism is also a form of domestic imperialism, Jacobsen states. It is an outdated ideology since it basically represents what Jacobsen calls "a last attempt to repair capitalism".[23]

This critique of Italian Fascism was also directed at Vidkun Quisling, who, together with the DNSAP leader Frits Clausen, had attended a congress in Montreux in December 1934, where an international coordinating committee for nationalistic movements, Comitati d'Azione per l'Universalità di Roma [CAUR] – meant as a fascist international – was established under the strict leadership of the Italian Fascist Party.[24] Here, Quisling was elected to the central committee and later became its propaganda leader, thus agitating for "universal fascism". For the *Ragnarok* people, the support of the leader of National Unity for the Montreux International was another proof of his lack of understanding of National Socialism and the Nordic idea.[25] According to them, the anti-universalism of National Socialism led to respect for the autonomy of every people. Although the Nordic-Germanic race was superior to all others, other races had to be allowed an independent development within their natural geopolitical habitats.

The Nordic Race and "The Jew"

However, the cultural relativist tolerance stopped at the Jews, who in their antisemitic and conspiratorial worldview, was perceived as systematically working towards the destruction of the Nordic race. For the *Ragnarok* circle, "the Jew" was the very antithesis of the Nordic-Germanic. In their view, the Jewish and the Nordic-Germanic races constituted two conflicting principles of life, which had been fighting a cosmic battle since the dawn of time. This eternal struggle explained both historical events and the contemporary social, cultural, and political misery of the present day.[26]

This sharp dualism constituted a necessary component of their worldview. First, their portrayal of "the Jew" put the idealised image of the Nordic race in necessary relief. "The Jew" functioned as a symbolic inversion of all Nordic-Germanic virtues. Second, the mighty hidden power of "Judea" answered an urgent question raised by their unlimited idealisation of the Nordic race: if the Nordic race is the bearer of an almost unlimited number of outstanding physical and spiritual qualities, why then had it not long ago conquered the world? Why had the Nordic Utopia not already been realised? The answer was that an almost demonic counter-force had always thwarted the aspirations of the Nordic race. These were represented not only by the Jews themselves but also by others who more or less consciously acted as their henchmen and infected the culture with the "Jewish spirit", such as communists, other "cultural Bolsheviks", Freemasons, and Christians.

The Norwegian Tribe

The anti-universalism of National Socialism, as the *Ragnarok* milieu understood it, also had to entail respect for the freedom and independence of each Nordic-Germanic tribe. The development towards racial awakening had to take place "within the framework of a people", Jacobsen wrote.[27] This argument was based on a consistent *völkisch* thinking: here was the core concept of "blood and soil" [*Blut und Boden*]. Each nation was organically connected to the soil of its homeland. Since ancient times, nature had shaped the characteristics of the tribes. Since there are significant differences between the natural conditions in Germany and Norway, this had also shaped the South and North Germanics in different ways, where the harsh natural environment and the lack of racial mixing had selected the Germanic tribes of the North to become the fiercest and purest representative of the race. At its core, National Socialism was valid for all people of Nordic blood. However, the external form was characterised by the individual peoples' naturally created particularities. Thus, it would have also been futile to try to replant the specifically German variant of National Socialism on Norwegian soil.

As can be seen, the *Ragnarok* circle's understanding of National Socialism largely coincided with the notions that Adolf Egeberg Jr. and Poul Sommer had been introduced to during the SS' first leadership course in Munich. The SS also based its ideology on Hans F.K. Günther's concept of the Nordic race and advocated pan-Germanic unity as a result of an independent racial awakening within the different Nordic peoples. Throughout the interwar period, the *Ragnarok* circle consequently regarded the SS as its closest ally in Germany. This affinity was mutual, and Himmler and his organisation maintained close ties with Jacobsen and several of his associates throughout the interwar period.

At the same time, the *Ragnarok* milieu's glorification of the Norwegian and Norse peoples was a source of conflict. The circle not only believed that each tribe's version of National Socialism had to be regarded as equal but also

that their Norwegian version was, in fact, more genuine than the German one. Through natural selection and hardening living conditions in "Ultima Thule", the Norwegian tribe had become carriers of purer Nordic racial qualities than the Germans. Also, they had preserved to a greater extent the true Germanic and Old Norse essence in their culture. During the war, this notion led to growing conflicts with the German occupying forces in Norway and, for some members of the *Ragnarok* circle, to outright resistance.

Wilfred Petersen and the National Socialist Party

After attending the SS course in Munich in 1932, Poul Sommer founded his own party, Denmark's National Socialist Party [*Danmarks National Socialistisk Parti*, DNSP]. From the outset, this emphasised the Nordic aspect. The slogan on the front page of the first issue of the party magazine *Kampen* read: "Our struggle for a Nordic Denmark". In the same issue, it was stated that the DNSP wanted to protect the Nordic race and create a society characterised by a Nordic, socialist spirit.[28]

However, neither Poul Sommer nor Ejnar Vaaben's organisations developed into more than political study circles, although they came to influence Danish National Socialism in the following years. Poul Sommer left the political scene for some time to devote himself to his career, and in 1933, his party merged with a party under the leadership of Wilfred Petersen – the person who more than anyone else in Denmark did try to develop a particular Nordic National Socialism.[29] By the end of 1931, shortly after his dismissal from the army due to budget reductions, Wilfred Petersen appeared in the milieu of the DNSAP. Within weeks, the young charismatic officer was elected head of the party's Copenhagen branch. Even if his political life started in the DNSAP, it soon continued in his own party.

In 1935, Petersen founded the National Socialist Party [*National-Socialistisk Parti*, NSP], which consisted mainly of young militants from the Copenhagen branch of the DNSAP, something that made it adopt a thuggish political style. Through the 1930s, activists were involved in constant street battles with communists and social democrats (members of the conservative youth organisation and the DNSAP) and in several attacks on Jews and homosexuals. Some members even bombed the home of the Minister of Defence and attempted to blackmail wealthy businessmen.[30]

Even if the NSP obviously emulated the political style of the German SA, Petersen later claimed that the break with the DNSAP was because he wanted to distance himself from German National Socialism. When questioned years later by the police, he explained that he became aware that the founder of the DNSAP had carbon-copied the German NSDAP programme. He found this "dangerous" since the Germans could, in this way, easily convince Danish National Socialists of their opinions and thus weaken "Danish national views".[31] This scepticism towards Germany soon prompted another radical shift.

Left Turn

In February 1935, the readers of Wilfred Petersen's youth magazine, called *NSU*, could notice a significant change: on the front page, a bolt of lightning had replaced the swastika. The swastika had so far been the party's main symbol and pivotal in the party's political theatre. Not only had the Nazi symbol disappeared, but also now the magazine called itself a "combat-publication for Nordic social-revolutionary youth in Denmark". Likewise, the abbreviated party name, NSU, no longer referred to National Socialism but to the Nordic Socialist Youth [*Nordisk Socialistisk Ungdom*]. Still, the most important change was that the party itself was renamed the Danish Socialist Party [*Dansk Socialistisk Parti*], usually abbreviated as DSP.

The reason for this dramatic change was Wilfred Petersen's "turn to the left". This never materialised in any coherent ideology and political programme but was expressed through a strong focus on anti-capitalism and an overall revolutionary party ethos. Typical of this development is the statement that the emblem worn by its members symbolised an "air-purifying" bolt of lightning portent of the impending "revolutionary storm".[32] That the DSP regarded itself as a "leftist", social-revolutionary party was also reflected in the backgrounds of its new members, of whom several were recruited from the Social Democrats and Communists.[33]

This "leftist" tendency had been present in Petersen's early political career but now became more pronounced. To the members, he stated that he wanted the DSP to follow a distinct socialist and Nordic course. The change of symbol, he explained, was in deference to "the victory of true socialism". Although he admitted the swastika was "the age-old symbol of our ancestors", it had become unusable when it became the symbol of their political rivals in the DNSAP, which Petersen regarded as "fake" National Socialists. To distance itself further from the DNSAP, the party substituted the term "National Socialism" with "Nordic Socialism".[34]

Wilfred Petersen regarded life as an eternal struggle between a materialist and an idealist worldview. Materialism, an inherently Jewish way of thinking, was the sterile pursuit of personal gain with no consideration for nation, people, or race. This thinking permeated all political ideologies except his own: all movements of what he called "the old kind", from Conservatism to Marxism, had a materialistic view. Only through the creation of an anti-materialist ideal would one achieve a society without class divisions.

Hence, Petersen viewed Marxism as barren and materialistic. His form of socialism would be achieved through an idealist national revolution, which would bring about a classless society unified by race. Though strongly anti-capitalist, the "socialism" Petersen promoted was based on racial and national solidarity rather than entailing any fundamental socio-economic changes. Upon closer inspection, one finds that his economic programme demanded no major economic or social changes and was far from as revolutionary as party propaganda suggested.

"Nordic Culture"

To Petersen, this idealist racial revolution would not only awaken and unite the Danes but also all the Nordic peoples. Therefore, the new direction of the DSP also manifested itself in emphasising a common "Nordic culture". The term is vague and lacks specific content, but it is nonetheless possible to identify some main features: it entailed the devotion to a common Nordic culture – to him, the most treasured property of the Danish people and the source from which revolutionary change would stem. Nordic culture was based on the inherent characteristics of the Nordic race, and Petersen regarded Scandinavians as the racially purest of European peoples. This was because the Scandinavians had avoided mixing with other races and thus kept the primaeval Nordic qualities intact. According to Petersen, the veneration and protection of Nordic culture also ought to be the primary goal of the – somewhat racially inferior – Germans in the NSDAP.

However, this Nordic culture could only blossom if the materialistic influence of Jews through both Marxism and liberalism was defeated. Therefore, the DSP wanted to secure the Nordic culture through suppression of all degenerating Jewish influence, which manifested itself through religion, family politics and culture. "The Nordic idea" also had bearing on the foreign policy of the DSP. If the Scandinavian countries entered a tightknit pan-Nordic union, this could muster a military alliance that would assert itself vis-à-vis the great powers of Europe, foremost Germany and Great Britain.

Petersen's ideas coincided closely with those of the Norwegian *Ragnarok* circle. What bound them together was their devotion to the Nordicist racial ideas, a scepticism towards German National Socialism and efforts to develop an independent Nordic variety of National Socialism, which also stood in opposition to the larger National Socialist parties in their respective countries. In Norway, the Hagal rune was adopted to signify their rejection of National Unity and its party-insignia, the Christian Olav's Cross. From its first issue in 1935, this symbol adorned the front page of *Ragnarok*. As a token of their common ideals, the DSP publication *Nordiske Stemmer* followed suit in 1936 and changed its logo from a Danish runic stone to the Hagal rune. From there on, *Nordiske Stemmer* carried regular advertisements for *Ragnarok*, and Wilfred Petersen also contributed articles in the Norwegian magazine.[35]

Was the Danish Socialist Party National Socialist?

DSP members were offended if anyone called them fascists. To them, fascism was an Italian phenomenon which had nothing to offer Nordic societies. Just as the *Ragnarok* circle attacked Quisling for his participation in the CAUR meeting in 1934, the DSP strongly criticised DNSAP leader Frits Clausen in *Stormen* for joining the Montreux International. In short,

the DSP distanced itself from both Italian Fascism and German National Socialism. One might therefore ask whether Wilfred Petersen's party was at all fascist, let alone National Socialist.

Like most fascist movements, the DSP's ideology was not coherent and codified.[36] In fact, the DSP had no clearly formulated political programme, but rather a series of often abstractly worded core ideals. Still, if one compares the party's various publications, it is possible to extract the basic features of their ideological universe.

A main trait was a series of antipathies: antisemitism, anti-communism, anti-capitalism, anti-liberalism, and anti-conservatism. Moreover, they wanted a national revolution and the establishment of a new authoritarian state. The DSP's mode of political expression was militant mobilisation and the use of evocative myths and symbols. The party emphasised the worship of combatant masculinity, youth, and the charismatic leader. Thus, it displayed the defining features of generic fascism.[37] These, combined with the stress on racial Nordicism and fierce antisemitism, force one to conclude that Wilfred Petersen's party indeed not only was fascist in a generic sense but also National Socialist, even if one must add, in a distinctly "heretical" way.[38]

The Fight against Clausen and the German Occupiers

On 5 December 1947, the DNSAP's leader, Frits Clausen, died of a heart attack while in prison. According to the press, his last words were directed at his worst enemy: "May Wilfred Petersen receive a severe sentence". Clausen's last words were in fact that he was feeling ill. Nevertheless, there is some truth to the story. In the preceding hours, Clausen had been at the police station for questioning, and there he stated that he wished all manner of evils to befall Petersen.[39] Seen in light of the extreme smear campaign against him that Petersen had launched in the preceding years, one can hardly blame Clausen for harbouring such hopes.

The attacks on Clausen had strategical, ideological, and personal reasons. Naturally, the DSP and the DNSAP competed over the same group of potential supporters. The propaganda war that Petersen launched was therefore not aimed at the DNSAP's rank-and-file members, whom he hoped in time would join his party, but their leader, Frits Clausen. Early on, DSP's publication, *Stormen*, consistently spelled his first name "Fritz", the German version, instead of the Danish spelling he himself used. This was, of course, to suggest that Clausen represented something German and un-Danish. Wilfred Petersen declared himself to be the promoter of a true form of Danish-Nordic National Socialism and hence naturally wanted to portray Clausen as a stooge for German imperialism.

Apart from the strategic and ideological competition, Petersen's campaign is characterised by an element of personal hatred. Soon, the attacks on Clausen became vehemently defamatory and almost unhinged. There was not one bad

character trait Clausen was not accused of possessing, from his obesity to alcoholism and "bad blood", resulting in a daughter with Down Syndrome.[40]

The established press appreciated Petersen's attacks since they provided them with quotes describing Clausen in ways normally avoided by well-respected newspapers. Since this was reporting on internal National Socialist strife, the journalists felt exempt from ordinary rules of decency, like when the social democratic newspaper quoted *Stormen* calling Clausen "the fat parasite" in 1935.[41] This campaign against the DNSAP leader became even more intense during the German occupation of Denmark in 1940. This led Wilfred Petersen into open and covert resistance against the occupiers and their collaborators and eventually into German captivity.

Ambiguous Resistance

From the occupation onwards, Wilfred Petersen's activities must be described as open and covert resistance to both the German occupiers and the Danish collaborators within the DNSAP. This led the head of the Gestapo in Denmark, Karl Heinz Hoffmann, to describe him as a "false" national socialist in 1943.[42] Hoffmann was wrong. Petersen never gave up his ideological views. Even so, he became involved in activities of an extremely ambiguous nature. On the one hand, he cultivated close contact with important figures among the German occupiers, particularly within the military intelligence service, *Abwehr*, and at the German embassy. On the other hand, he opposed the Germans both directly and indirectly and established connections with right-wing resistance groups.[43]

His indirect resistance manifested itself through a fierce campaign directed at the German-backed DNSAP and its leader, Frits Clausen. Since Petersen was regarded as a national socialist, he and his people were able to publicly attack the "traitor" Clausen and his party significantly harder than other groups. His direct resistance was more ambiguous and consisted, among other things, of providing the resistance movement with information about the DNSAP, which Petersen was able to provide through his secret informants within the party. This information was, in turn, used in the quite extensive illegal press in Denmark.[44]

Another activity was espionage within the Waffen-SS and guard corps established by the occupying forces, in which Danes could volunteer. This type of information was collected by party members who had joined the Waffen-SS and was passed on by Petersen to his contacts in the intelligence service of the resistance movement. In 1943, Petersen also organised the obstruction of the establishment of SS corps by sending 15 of his party members to an SS school in Denmark. Here, they subsequently tried to sabotage the ideological education of a newly established SS unit. Most members, several of whom stole weapons, were consequently thrown out of the school and described in an SS report as "political gangsters" – a characterisation which may not be far from the mark.[45]

In October 1943, the German authorities finally had enough, and Wilfred Petersen was arrested by the Danish police and handed over to the Gestapo, who worked on his case for six weeks but had difficulty deciding what to do with this ambiguous character. Eventually, they opted for "honorary" incarceration in the Garlitz Castle in Mecklenburg. Here, Wilfred Petersen spent the last part of the war under spartan but comfortable conditions.

Ragnarok – From Reluctance to Resistance

After the German occupation of Norway in 1940, the *Ragnarok* circle reacted strongly against Reichskommissar Josef Terboven's brutal occupation regime. In their opinion, this was in breach of the pan-Germanic racial solidarity and disrespectful of the uniqueness of the "Norwegian tribe". Hitler's Germany had now thrown its highest principles overboard and succumbed to "un-Germanic", imperialist politics, they claimed. As ideological ammunition for this critique, they used the theory of qualitative differences within the Germanic racial community. In August 1940, for example, *Ragnarok* editor Hans S. Jacobsen concluded that a Germanic unification should not mean the dissolution of nationalities: "the nationality boundaries within this vast Germanic area are too old to be erased. In fact, they depend not only on our thousand-year-old national formations but also on the original peculiarities of the different tribes".[46] In consequence, the solution – at least within the foreseeable future – must be a Germanic alliance, not a unification into one great Germanic empire. Concerning the organisation and distribution of power within this alliance, the qualitative racial characteristics must be the decisive factor, he claims, almost suggesting that the racially purer Norwegians must rule over the Germans:

> We have always worked for a constructive cooperation and a Germanic alliance. However, if this should mean that the less populous Germanic states are branded as second rate because they have fewer heads than the big ones, then we are on the wrong track. That kind of majority rule is hardly in accordance with sound Nordic principles and will not be a blessing for neither the more populous nor the less populous state. The racial element ought to be decisive, and seen from this perspective there is, as everyone knows, nothing to prevent a small people from ruling over a much larger one.[47]

Up to the beginning of 1943, the *Ragnarok* circle regarded the SS, who they believed shared their Nordic ideals, as an ally in their fight against both Quisling's puppet government and Reichskommissar Terboven's repressive rule. When the Germanic SS Norway [*Germanske SS Norge*, GSSN], the Norwegian national chapter of the *Allgemeine SS*, was established in the summer of 1942, Jacobsen became editor of its newspaper *Germaneren*, and Per Imerslund, the milieu's celebrated writer, adventurer, and Waffen-SS

volunteer, a regular contributor. Here, Imerslund used the newspaper to launch several ill-veiled attacks on the Quisling government, claiming that National Unity was under the influence of the "artificial Jews" in the masonic lodges. However, despite assurances from the SS leadership of Germanic brotherhood and equality, the *Ragnarok* members soon became convinced that the GSSN also served as a tool for German imperialism and withdrew from the organisation and its newspaper.[48] Their former close relationship with the security service of the SS also cooled considerably.

In May 1943, the SS research institution *Ahnenerbe* was to hold a conference in the German city of Hanover. From Berlin, Ahnenerbe's representative in Norway, Hans Schwalm, was instructed to invite Hans S. Jacobsen and Per Imerslund. Schwalm, however, had reservations. He therefore contacted Dr. Fritz Volberg in the German *Sicherheitsdienst*, who knew this scene and confirmed Schwalm's suspicion. Admittedly, there was no reason to doubt Hans S. Jacobsen's pan-Germanism, Volberg stated, but this had lately assumed a form that elevated the Norwegians to a position as the only genuine Germanics. In other words, his ideas had transformed from genuine pan-Germanism into "Norse nationalism".[49] As for Per Imerslund, he seemed to have withdrawn from politics as a result of the injuries he had sustained as a Waffen-SS soldier in Finland.[50] Volberg's assessments were largely correct. With two exceptions: first, Jacobsen and the *Ragnarok* circle's Norse-nationalist variant of pan-Germanism was not of recent date; second, Per Imerslund had not withdrawn from politics. On the contrary, he was travelling throughout the country to recruit Waffen-SS veterans into his new network of resistance groups targeting both the Quisling regime and the German occupation forces.

In the late summer of 1943, Per Imerslund had become convinced that completely different and far more drastic measures than critical articles in *Germaneren* were required to realise a true National Socialist Norway. In September–October 1943, he gathered a group of close friends mainly from the *Ragnarok* circle on his remote mountain farm in southern Norway. During the four-day meeting, they started planning active resistance. This was to be organised in small cells who, at a given time, would begin a guerrilla warfare against the German occupants and Quisling's treasonous regime. The group even plotted to kidnap Quisling and execute him for crimes against "the Norwegian national will". Although Imerslund began recruiting people, his plans never reached fruition due to his death in December 1943 from septicaemia.[51]

Varieties of National Socialisms

As historian Daniel Kunkeler noted, National Socialism is inherently elastic, lacking a coherent theory.[52] This is further accentuated by its normative anti-rationalism, rejecting "sterile logic and intellectualism" in favour of emotive myths and rituals. This makes it very flexible and easy to interpret

in different ways. Even within Hitler's movement, one can observe such different accentuations and inner tensions, with interpretations ranging from a German nationalist stress on the solidarity of the whole People's Community [*Volksgemeinschaft*], for instant within the German Labour Front [*Deutsche Arbeitsfront*], to the SS' racial elitism and pan-Germanic focus on the Nordic Race Community [*Rassengemeinschaft*]. This is why, in the beginning, the Nordic heretics regarded the SS as an ally in their own adaptation of National Socialism and why they could develop an ideology opposed to other forms both in Germany and their respective countries.

However, it may seem strange that convinced national socialists could contemplate and even engage in active resistance. For Wilfred Petersen and the members of the *Ragnarok* circle, this was a logical consequence of their heretical ideology. Their way of perceiving National Socialism never made them unreserved, loyal supporters of Hitler's Germany. They always remained dreamers who truly believed in the creation of an independent, racially pure, Norse and "socialist" Norway and Denmark. This project eventually led to clashes with Nazi Germany when the political realities under the occupation came into increasingly sharp conflict with their maximalist National Socialist – or Nordic Socialist – utopianism.

The story of these Norwegian and Danish National Socialist heretics shows us the varieties and ambiguities of Nordic fascism. It highlights ideological differences with respect to the interpretation of national socialism and demonstrates that some of these interpretations, in fact, legitimised not only critique of but also outright resistance to Nazi Germany and its occupying forces. The core of this conflict was the interpretation of the Nordicist ideology. These racial ideas, mainly developed by Hans F.K. Günther and strongly furthered by Himmler's SS, afforded the Nordic peoples with a special elevated racial status. In turn, these oppositional National Socialists used this to criticise what they perceived as ideologically unacceptable imperialism by Hitler's Germany and its occupational regimes in Norway and Denmark. In this ideological development and subsequent political conflicts, we can see the contours of what may be called a particular version of Nordic fascism.

Moreover, the ideology of the *Ragnarok* circle and Wilfred Petersen shows many similarities with other fascist and national socialist movements, groups, and milieus in what we might name the "European periphery", who also developed their own distinct ideological versions – for example, Gustavs Celmiņš' Latvian *Thunder Cross* movement and Corneliu Zelea Codreanu's Romanian *Legion of the Archangel Michael*. Here too, we find people who, by employing *völkisch*, religious and racialist ideas, modified the concept of national socialism to fit their particular national culture and history. For many of these groups, this led at one time or another to conflicts with the Third Reich.

This poses the question of whether it is now time to start talking about various "national socialisms" rather than one "National Socialism".[53]

The differences between the different movements self-designated as such are in fact so great that this concept must be used generically, as a theoretically constructed subcategory within generic fascism.

Notes

1 Emberland and Kott, *Himmlers Norge*, 57–77. See also Karcher, "National Socialisms in Clinch" in this volume and Breuer, *Die Nordische Bewegung in der Weimarer Republik*.
2 Pedersen, "Den nordiske tanke," 117–134. Karcher, "Schirmorganisation der Nordischen Bewegung," 7–35; Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 60–97.
3 Rigsarkivet Copenhagen, PA 06540 Ejnar Vaaben, Ejnar Vaaben og hustru, korrespondanse mm. 1925–1982, Himmler to Vaaben, 9 March 1931.
4 Christiansen and Hyllested, *Fra lykkeridder til landsforræder*, 783–797.
5 See Bak et al., "Early Nordic Fascism and Antisemitic Conspiracism."
6 Riksarkivet Oslo (RA), L-sak 528/47 Adolf Egeberg Jr., Copy of letter from Thilo von Trotha to Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt, 29 March 1935.
7 Emberland and Kott, *Himmlers Norge*, 81–84.
8 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin (PAAA), Oslo 236, Vermerk, Sahm, 7 November 1938.
9 *Fronten*, June 1932, 2.
10 *Fronten*, December 1932.
11 *Fronten*, February 1933.
12 *Nasjonalsosialisten*, May 1934.
13 Emberland, *Fra gutterommet til Gestapo*.
14 See Bak et al., "Early Nordic Fascism and Antisemitic Conspiracism."
15 *Tidens Tegn*, 18 February 1939.
16 Bruknapp, "Ideene splitter partiet."
17 De Figueiredo, *Fri mann*.
18 Emberland, "Neither Hitler nor Quisling," 119–133; Emberland, *Religion og rase*, 111–115.
19 Emberland, *Religion og rase*, 147–152.
20 *Ragnarok*, September 1935, 169.
21 Emberland, *Religion og rase*, 153–158.
22 *Moss Avis*, 3 October 1935.
23 *Ragnarok*, September 1935, 139.
24 Dahl, En fører blir til, 360–364.
25 *Ragnarok*, September 1935, 139.
26 Emberland, *Religion og rase*, 158–169.
27 Jacobsen, "Nasjonalsocialisme og fascisme," *Ragnarok*, September 1935, 141.
28 *Kampen*, 15 December 1932.
29 See Christiansen and Hyllestedt, *Fra lykkeridder til landsforræder*.
30 Christensen, *Følg Wilfred!*, 172–184.
31 Rigsarkivet Copenhagen, Københavns Byret 25. Afdeling 64/1947, Københavns Politi 1. Undersøgelseskammer, d.15.5 1 46.
32 *Stormen*, June 1935.
33 Christensen, *Følg Wilfred!*, 87. During its searches in the homes of party members, the police noted that Marxist and National Socialist literature often stood side by side in the members' bookshelves. It was probably not entirely off-target when a former party member described the atmosphere of a typical evening meeting at party headquarters as something you would normally only encounter in a communist cell.

34 *Principper*, 1936. See, e.g., this programmatic pamphlet which was republished several times.
35 *Ragnarok*, "Nordisk politikk," May 1943. The article was first published during the war, in 1943. *Ragnarok* was considerably more viable than *Nordiske Stemmer*, which stopped publication in 1936, while *Ragnarok* continued until 1945.
36 Petersen did, however, draw up a series of party programmes, which contained 32 points in the 1934 version. Between the first programme made for the NSP and the one made during the DSP period, there occurred no significant changes since the importance of the actual party programmes became less significant than more general items presented in magazines and pamphlets.
37 Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*.
38 Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*. Fascist movements were not necessarily antisemitic; hence, this aspect is not included in the attempt to compose a definition.
39 Christensen, *Følg Wilfred!*, 122.
40 "Rene Folk med Rene Hænder." Blade af Fritz Clausens Blaa Bog, 1940.
41 *Social-Demokraten*, 9 September 1935.
42 Rigsarkivet Copenhagen, Københavns Byret 25. Afdeling 64/47, Københavns Politi, 10 December 1946.
43 Christensen, *Følg Wilfred!*, 246–252.
44 "Rene Folk med Rene Hænder." Blade af Fritz Clausens Blaa Bog, 1940.
45 Christensen, *Følg Wilfred!*, 246–265.
46 *Ragnarok*, August 1940, 117.
47 Ibid.
48 Emberland, *Religion og Rase*, 294–298.
49 Bundesarchiv Berlin (BArch), NS 21/805, "Vermerk, SS-Hauptsturmführer Schwalm, Ahnenerbe, Oslo, Betr.: Tagung in Hannover am 13., 14. und 15. Mai 1943, Bezug: Unterredung mit SS-O'Stuf Dr. Volberg am 6.4.1943".
50 Emberland and Kott, *Himmlers Norge*, 417.
51 Emberland and Rougthvedt, *Det ariske idol*, 430–455.
52 Kunkeler, *Making Fascism in Sweden and the Netherlands*.
53 Compare with Karcher, "National Socialisms in Clinch."

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5 Hidden Knowledge and Mythical Origins

Atlantis, Esoteric Fascism, and Nordic Racial Divinity

Gustaf Forsell

The myth of Atlantis is intimately linked to the "Nordic" in Nordic fascism. Esoteric narratives about a mythical Golden Age have – far from being fringe depictions elaborated by lunatics obsessed with the bizarre – held a significant position in fascist conceptions of *the north* and the origin of the Nordic race into the present day and is a core element in the ideology of Nordic fascism.[1] The Atlantis myth reflects a current in esoteric thought known as perennialism, a view that all of the world's belief systems share a single metaphysical truth and origin. When racialised, the basic idea of this esoteric narrative, besides its differences in shapes and contexts, is that the heroic, inventive, and culture-creating Nordic race originated in an ethereal habitat located in the extreme north – sometimes called Atlantis, Hyperborea, or Ultima Thule – a place from which the Nordic race then migrated to the south, conquered the world, and founded every high civilisation throughout history, all of which degenerated, especially through race mixing. While scholars have begun exploring this diverse landscape of racialised esoteric thought, albeit mostly in a specific German context,[2] research on what the myth of Atlantis might implicate to the ideology of Nordic fascism is lacking. Such a focus contributes to insights into fascist temporality, which reinforces ideas of a supreme but lost past followed by a degenerated present by desiring a struggle for a pervasive palingenesis marked by national and/or racial revival.[3] This implies that esoteric fascist ideas about a distinct Nordic race originating in a mythical north serve as both grandiose past and future utopias and suggest that the "Nordic" in Nordic fascism not only refers to a geographical region but also includes an aspired re-instalment of a paradise lost, an imaginary geography of dreams and visions, images and revelations.

In this chapter, I will analyse interwar Nordic esoteric fascist ideas about a mythical continent once located in the extreme north as the origin of the Nordic race and how these notions served to reconnect the Nordic race with the divine. The chapter focuses on the *Hyperborean narrative*, a racialised variant of the myth of Atlantis based on the divine unity of the

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Nordic race and its racial soul. I examine how this idea was articulated in the Nordics and Germany, although it was limited neither to these countries nor to the interwar period. Radical traditionalists, such as Julius Evola (1898–1974) and Massimo Scaligero (1906–1980), promoted ideas on Atlantis as a prehistoric Nordic high culture and predecessor of Italian civilisation.[4] The British esoteric fascist James Larratt Battersby (1907–1955) – who believed that Adolf Hitler was Jesus reincarnated – adhered to the notion that "ancient Britain was an outpost of the empire of Atlantis".[5] The American esotericist William Dudley Pelley (1890–1965), founder of the Silver Shirt Legion in 1933, styled after the German SA, claimed that Atlantis was an "island full of wonders", a "Golden Age" and ruled by "the Nordics of the ancient world".[6] Ideas about a divine Nordic race that originated in a mythical north are also predominant in some esoteric strands of contemporary white nationalism in the United States.[7] The Hyperborean narrative is thus a transnational idea which highlights the value of analysing how notions about the mythical roots of the Nordic race have been expressed in Nordic fascism.

The chapter builds on empirical fragments of *esoteric fascism*. Fascism, as outlined in the introductory chapter of this volume, is understood as a specific constellation of the radical nationalist landscape aspiring for a revolutionary struggle for a racially or culturally homogenous nation.[8] The word *esoteric* refers to hidden knowledge accessible only to those initiated into secret teachings, thereby opening a world of lost civilisations, sacred guardians, extraterrestrials, mystic abodes or places, and mythic creatures.[9] Esoteric fascism here designates a diverse current in the fascist political family, aspiring national or racial rebirth by promoting ideas of hidden gnosis centred on racial divinity, such as, for instance, that the Nordic race first materialised in an ethereal habitat located in the North. This chapter outlines such ideas in three parts. The first covers a brief overview of how interpretations of Atlantis, from Plato to Theosophy and Ariosophy, contributed to shaping ideas of the north and of Nordic racial divinity. The second part highlights the Manhem Society [*Samfundet Manhem*], a Swedish fascist think tank established in 1934, to illustrate how fascist actors in Nordic countries have applied the Hyperborean narrative. The third part shows how the Hyperborean narrative was applied in the early years of the *Ahnenerbe*, a German National Socialist research institute, with a certain focus on Herman Wirth (1885–1981), his two expeditions to Scandinavia in 1935 and 1936 and how Ahnenerbe quests to find the Holy Grail were connected with the Hyperborean narrative. I will begin with Atlantis, a Nordic utopia lost to the sea.

Atlantis, the North, and the Divine Nordic Race

The idea of Atlantis as the origin of a grand civilisation has a long tradition in scientific and esoteric thought. It was probably first recorded by Plato in the dialogues *Timaeus* and *Critias*, depicting Atlantis as a sacred island

located outside the Pillars of Hercules, a place usually associated with the Strait of Gibraltar. The dialogues describe the island as a place of heroism and energy, marvellous beauty and inexhaustible profusion, governed by a "great and wonderful monarchy", and as a civilisation housing "one of the original earth-born men" before it ultimately sunk into the sea in "one terrible day and night of storm".[10]

Later reinterpretations of the dialogues emphasised the heydays of the civilisation and that they marked the origin of a supreme people. Swedish scientist Olof Rudbeck the Elder (1630–1702) claimed in his four-volume *Atlantica*, published between 1679 and 1702, that Scandinavia was the location of Atlantis. French astronomer Jean-Sylvain Bailly (1736–1793) placed Atlantis in the Arctic Circle, suggested that the Atlanteans were the Hyperboreans of classical legend and promoted the idea that the continent was the cradle of human civilisation from which all high cultures of the world derived.[11] At the end of the 19th century, two Americans, as well as others, furthered Rudbeck and Bailly's ideas. Senator Ignatius Donnelly (1831–1901) stressed in *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World* (1882) that Atlantis was the ancient home of humanity between the Fall and the Deluge, whose kings, queens, and heroes have been preserved in human memory by being made into the gods and goddesses of Norse, Greek, Phoenician, Hindu, and Maya mythologies.[12] William F. Warren (1833–1929), the first president of Boston University, published *Paradise Found: The Cradle of the Human Race at the North Pole* (1885), in which he claimed that Atlantis, the Garden of Eden, Mount Meru, Avalon, and Hyperborea were memorised remnants of a former inhabited land at the North Pole where humanity emerged.[13]

Alongside these ideas, according to which the continent could be located with established scientific methods, some esoteric actors highlighted Atlantis as the cradle of human civilisation. The Russian noblewoman Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891), co-founder and chief ideologue of the Theosophical Society established in New York City in 1875, was a leading person in the esoteric tradition, and she elaborated ideas about the origin and nature of the Nordic Aryan race. Through the doctrine of Theosophy, the basic idea of which is to adapt scientific thoughts to postulate the notion of spiritual evolution through innumerable worlds and eras springing from an underlying and intangible divine force, Blavatsky integrated theories on Atlantis and other ideas into an alternative theory of human evolution that diverged from Darwin's theories.[14] She found interest in and was inspired by a wide range of different sources, including American spiritualism, the esoteric lore of ancient Egypt, Gnosticism, secret societies, and romanticist tirades against the rationalism and materialism of modern Western civilisation. Other ideas that Blavatsky combined were Bailly's ideas on the mythical continent of Hyperborea, emerging Social Darwinist theories, and Hindu notions about Kali Yuga, the basic idea of which is that it is considered the last of four world ages marked by increasing depravation, which culminates in a cleansing apocalypse, whereafter the spiral ascents back into divinity.

Some of Blavatsky's core ideas, which were about to be brought to esoteric fascism, were presented in the two-volume *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), in which she outlined her esoteric view of human evolution. Her basic idea or "one fundamental law in Occult Science" was that there exists "radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature", meaning that human principles correlate to "seven-fold occult forces".[15] In the first volume, *Cosmogenesis*, Blavatsky integrated ideas about Kali Yuga and described a cosmological cyclical process of birth and rebirth in which all subsequent creations pass through seven evolutionary cycles. The first four cycles reflect the fall of the universe from divine grace into its following redemption over the next three; the cycle then restarts and continues repeatedly. The transcendental active force which holds together all cosmic energies on the unseen and on the manifested planes was called Fohat. Besides promoting the idea that this force manifests "the objectivised thought of the gods", Blavatsky claimed in accordance with contemporary vitalist and scientific thought that the manifestations of Fohat are electricity and solar energy.[16] In the second volume, *Anthropogenesis*, Blavatsky related humanity to this cosmological vision by proposing the evolution of seven root races. She could only present the first five, as the last two have not yet materialised. Human evolution began, according to Blavatsky, with three proto-human races that gradually lost their divine traits and became more man-like. The first root race was an Astral race evolved by "divine progenitors" in an "Imperishable Sacred Land"; the second Hyperborean root race emerged on a now-vanished continent in the extreme north that comprised "the whole of what is now known as Northern Asia"; the third Lemurian root race flourished on the continent of Lemuria in the Indian Ocean.[17] The fourth one developed "from a nucleus of Northern Lemurian Third Race Men" on a continent in the mid-Atlantic Ocean, which ultimately became "*the true home of the great Race known as the Atlanteans*".[18] Described as the first historical land, Atlantis was to Blavatsky far more extensive than the island depicted by Plato – which she claimed was a mere "fragment of this great Continent" – and its inhabitants were then succeeded by the current fifth Aryan root race, which emerged and developed in Europe.[19] Therefore, the basic idea of Blavatsky's root race theory is that Aryans are of divine origin degenerated into humans but will eventually, in correspondence with the cyclical process of the cosmos, ascent back into divinity.[20]

Blavatsky's teachings about Aryans' divine origins were soon incorporated into esoteric fascism. Theosophy underwent a rapid worldwide expansion in the 1880s, both in Asia and the West. The success of the Theosophical Society in the West was chiefly due to interest in ancient – especially Asian – religious traditions and the influence of Darwinian theory of evolution. At the time of the advent of Theosophy, ancient Vedic scriptures were translated into English, German, and French; research institutes dedicated to the emerging field of Indo-European studies were formed across Western Europe, and theories that the Aryan race originated in India were

formulated. In the 1850s, Charles Darwin presented his theory of natural selection, which contributed to settling evolution as a scientific fact and discrediting the church's teachings that humanity descended from Adam and Eve. In the midst of rapid social and economic changes in the late 19th century, the synthesis of ancient belief systems and modern science, which Blavatsky's ideas made possible, granted individuals a holistic worldview in which mythology and the rationalising progress of science became two sides of the same coin.[21]

Such a message attracted people in Nordic countries. The first Nordic Theosophical lodges were established in Sweden in 1889, in Norway and Denmark in 1893, and in Finland in 1894. A trans-Nordic Theosophical milieu emerged almost immediately. Norwegian, Danish, and Finnish Theosophists joined the Swedish Theosophical Society [*Svenska Teosofiska Samfundet*], which was acknowledged in 1893 with its change of name to the Scandinavian Theosophical Society [*Skandinaviska Teosofiska Samfundet*].[22] Theosophy's advent on German-speaking soil – with the first German Theosophical Society [*Deutsche Theosophische Gesellschaft*] being established in 1884 – was also due to Blavatsky's appealing holistic message, but it should be understood within the diverse *Völkisch* Movement that emerged after the unification of Germany in 1871. Through a spiritual emphasis on the word *Volk*,[23] the political project of the Völkisch Movement was characterised by radical nationalism, anti-liberalism, cultural pessimism, and racism.[24]

The Ariosophic milieu, a romantic reactionary and millenarian current in the Völkisch Movement, represented by figures such as Guido von List (1848–1919) and Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels (1874–1954), combined German Völkisch nationalism with esoteric thought, including Theosophy. It interlocked these ideas with *Nordicism*, a race theory popularised in the late 19th century, according to which the Nordic race is a superior but endangered race, descended from the far north and bound to its land through a mythic connection. Through this synthesis, Ariosophists vindicated a coming grand era of German or Aryan world rule. Guido von List combined Norse mythology with Theosophy into a doctrine called *Armanism* in his pursuit to liberate *Ario-Germans* from the defiling impact of Christianity, modernity, and industrialisation. He expounded in numerous publications that Ario-Germans represent the fifth and current race; he considered them the descendants of the Atlanteans and the kinsfolk of the giant Bergelmir and highlighted that stone formations in Lower Austria indicate remnants of an Atlantean island within the modern European continent.[25] Besides claiming that Ario-Germans represent the fifth root race and equating the fourth root race, the Atlanteans, with Bergelmir, List stressed by corresponding to Blavatsky's ideas about Astral and Hyperborean races that the third root race was related to the giant Thrudgelmir, whereas the two earlier root races, the relatives of Ymir and Orgelmir, were androgynous.[26]

Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels, a former Cistercian novitiate, presented his teachings of Theozoology around the same time List developed his Armanism doctrine. He was arguably the most influential Ariosophist at the time and was likely an important source of inspiration for the early National Socialist Movement.[27] Liebenfels claimed, probably by drawing on Blavatsky's idea that "the early Atlanteans" had been divided into two distinct classes, the "Sons of Night" and the "Sons of the Sun",[28] that the fourth race, the Atlanteans, had evolved into two antagonistic subspecies: divine Aryans and demonic dark-skinned races called "animal men" [*Tiermenschen*]. Aryans were the chosen people of God, but they degenerated because of idolatry and persistent interbreeding with animal men, which threatened the very existence of the Aryan race.[29] Seeking to illustrate that the nature of the primordial Aryan religion as imagined was anthropocentric and a "divinisation of humanity", Liebenfels suggested that the Bible's references to gods and sons of God were anthropological allusions to a spiritual-electric relationship between Aryans and an intangible divine force, implying that Aryans were "over-racial" [*übervölkisch*] and "supra-nationalist".[30] He embedded his ideas in the Hyperborean narrative. Claiming that Aryan tribes emerged from an aboriginal Nordic race, Liebenfels proposed an Aryan migration from the Nordics in two waves – the first turning southwards to the Mediterranean basin during the Stone Age and the second turning eastwards to the Red Sea, India, China, and Japan. Referring to late 19th-century thinkers elaborating upon the sunken continent of Atlantis, including Blavatsky and Donnelly, Liebenfels claimed that Aryans were culture bearers and creators of every supreme civilisation in history.[31] This brought him to the hypothesis that the Aryans' "anthropological root" should be sought in the West, either "in the new world, or in the legendary Atlantis".[32]

Ideas that Nordic Aryans possess divine traits and are bound to an ethereal abode in the extreme north, as outlined by Ariosophists, were anchored in and a product of practical political events, such as the unification of Germany in 1871, antisemitic hostilities, the prevailing scepticism towards liberal democracy, conspiracy theories on the causes, and aftermath of the First World War and the Great Depression. In his magazine *Ostara*, Liebenfels declared in 1927 that "the 'world war' ended with a provisional victory for the dark races and their leading people, the Jews".[33] The creation of the Weimar Republic and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, which included the so-called War Guilt clause that required Germany to disarm, make ample territorial concessions and pay reparations to Entente powers, amplified the need for a new narrative to reinforce ideas of a supreme, but lost past and envision cultural rebirth and racial revival. Leading Ariosophists whose ideas later gained influence in esoteric fascism, such as Rudolf John Gorsleben, Karl Weinländer (under the pseudonym Hermann Wieland), and Frenzolf Schmid, amongst others, promoted the possibility of tracing Aryan genealogy back to their Atlantean homeland by examining the Old

Testament, the Eddas, and the Vedas because these scriptures were said to depict a prehistoric, heroic Aryan-Atlantean civilisation.[34] Liebenfels can also be included in this current, as he described Jesus as an Aryan akin to Adonis and Baldur and declared that Norse, Greek, and Persian mythologies describe the primordial history of humanity.[35] Those active in Rudolf von Sebottendorf's Thule Society [*Thule-Gesellschaft*] dedicated themselves to the study of runes as Aryan symbols and rejected Christianity altogether by professing that "Our God is Walvater" and that "Wotan, Wili, We is the unity of the trinity".[36]

Although Ariosophists emphasised the divinity of the Nordic Aryan race in different ways, they were all based on perennialist-esoteric thought inspired by Blavatsky, to whom Theosophy is the essence of every religious scheme. This implied that the founders of these traditions, such as Moses, Siddhartha Gautama, Confucius, Jesus, and Zarathustra, were solely transmitters of "the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world".[37] Such notions were interlocked with theories later institutionalised in National Socialist Germany, proclaiming that Aryans descended from the extreme north, from which it spread across the globe. The leading National Socialist ideologue Alfred Rosenberg stated in his influential *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1930), which had sold at least 733,000 copies in Germany by 1939, the following:

> Only there [in the far north] could the sharp division of the halves of the year be made, only there could the sun to the core of the soul become a certainty for the life-renewing, creative, primordial content of the world. And that is why the old, ridiculous hypothesis is now becoming a probability that from a Nordic centre of creation, we call it the Atlantis without committing ourselves to the assumption of a sunken Atlantic continent, swarms of warriors emigrated radiantly as the first witnesses of the renewed incarnating Nordic wanderlust to conquer, to shape.[38]

The Notion of Nordic Atlantis in the Manhem Society

The Hyperborean narrative was part of ideas professed by an influential but assorted branch of Nordic fascism dedicated to esoteric thought that envisioned a future utopia by aspiring for a revival of Nordic racial identity as a remnant of an ethereal, grandiose past. Tore Strand and other Norwegians affiliated with the radical national socialist Ragnarok Circle, whose monthly *Ragnarok* secured a thousand subscribers almost immediately when it was established in 1933, adhered to ideas promoted by the radical nationalist ideologue Erling Winsnes (1893–1935), including the notion that Odin was the ancestor of the Nordic race.[39] Similar ideas were expressed in Sweden in the diverse network of engineer Carl-Ernfrid Carlberg (1889–1962) and Elof Eriksson (1883–1965). In the magazine *Nationen*, founded by Eriksson in

1925, an author explicitly referring to Blavatsky stated that the Nordic race "has been the ruling race that founded all higher human culture" ever since the continents of Atlantis and Lemuria "rose above the sea" and affirmed that every high culture throughout the history of Nordic origin degenerated because of race mixing.[40]

The pseudonym Arman was the author in *Nationen* perhaps most dedicated to esoteric fascist ideas. The esoteric fascist temporality outlined by Arman was emphatically supported by Eriksson, who published the author's articles as an offprint at the publishing house of *Nationen* shortly after their publications in mid-1934-entitled *Kristendomen – den eviga urariska religionen*. Apart from frequently advertising the offprint in *Nationen* until the magazine was dissolved in 1941, Eriksson sought to spread it to other Nordic countries, for instance, by suggesting it to a fascist bookstore in Helsinki.[41] Arman's basic idea was that

> […] the Aryan science, which has recently resurfaced, says that everything the official churches say about the origin of our religion and Christianity is false. Christianity is a primordial Aryan religion. In the Nordics – in the soul of Nordic man, the Aryan, this religion emerged.[42]

Based on this idea, Arman declared that the Holy City of God was not Jerusalem but the legendary and marvellous city of Atlantis, the capital of a prehistoric Nordic civilisation that once covered the Canary Islands, Ireland, Scotland, Iceland, Greenland, and Scandinavia, with colonies in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. By considering *religion*, the grandest creation of Atlantean civilisation, remnants of which are to be found in Christianity and Buddhism, as well as in Maya, Greek, and Norse mythology, Arman affirmed that a return to this primordial doctrine or *Atlantean Christianity* as practiced before it was defiled by Jews should mark the path towards the new epoch of Aryan truth.[43] Besides drawing on ideas promoted by Gorsleben, Donnelly, and others, Arman likely adhered to Liebenfels' thoughts on the fusion of race, Christianity, and esoteric thought. Although Liebenfels is not explicitly mentioned in the text, it is probable that Arman knew about the basic ideas of his *esoteric Christianity*, as Liebenfels was mentioned by name at least once in *Nationen* before 1934, and several other articles were dedicated to racialised esoteric thought.[44] Arman's Ariosophic worldview is also a vivid paraphrase of some of Liebenfels' notions, illustrated by Liebenfels' own remarks that "the primordial homeland of the Aryan *Völker* must have been located in the Nordics" and that Christianity in "origin", "essence", and "existence" is an exclusively Aryan religion.[45]

The story of Atlantis was also professed by people who were not as dedicated to esoteric ideas. Whenever Atlantis was utilised in such a way, it was merely applied in utopian terms. Otto Hallberg, for instance, wrote in the magazine *Klingan* – for a short time the organ of the Swedish National Socialist Party [*Svenska Nationalsocialistiska Partiet*] – about the "dream"

of Olof Rudbeck the Elder by suggesting that a future Swedish national socialist state should be built "into an Atlantis, a role model for every people, an ideal to look up to".[46]

The Hyperborean narrative was arguably most apparent in interwar Sweden within the activities of the Manhem Society, a group of fascists and national socialist sympathisers initiated by Carl-Ernfrid Carlberg in 1934.[47] Its founding document was established on 17 September, Olof Rudbeck the Elder's day of death. Carlberg himself posited that the Swedish people descended from "the legendary MANHEM, the holy land of Hyperboreans and 'the old Goths'" and that the Swedish nation was the "primordial homeland of Nordic-Aryan race".[48] The director of the Manhem Society, Ernst Bernhard Almquist (1852–1946), a professor at the Karolinska Institute, incorporated Frenzolf Schmid's ideas that the Old Testament is a perverted revision of the Aryan-Atlantean "primordial Bible" [*urbibel*]. This drew him to the conclusion, similar to Arman's *Kristendomen*, that "the doctrine of a God does not come from this Testament, it had existed and been confessed by Aryans for thousands of years".[49] In somewhat different terms, Claes Lindsström outlined the basics of Hans Hörbiger's World Ice Theory in the pamphlet *Världsisläran – en bro mellan vetenskap och myt* (1935). Hörbiger, who presented his theory in 1912, posited the idea that the solar systems were created when a waterlogged star collided with a gigantic star, causing an explosion, the fragments of which flung out into interstellar space, condensed and froze into giant blocks of ice. This theory additionally explained the creation of humanity since the Earth, one of the uncountable frozen ice blocks, had collided with a meteor containing divine sperm. Based on World Ice Theory, Lindsström suggested that the existence of a former Atlantean continent could explain similarities between civilisations on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.[50] Besides his pamphlet and lecture on the topic for members of Manhem Society, World Ice Theory was described in the membership magazine *Meddelanden från Samfundet Manhem* as "the backbone of a new revolutionary world explanation theory".[51]

Elaborations on Atlantis were one aspect that characterised the fascist temporality of the Manhem Society. Besides asserting that the Nordic race, its culture, and religion originated in the far north, its members presented the society as a nonpartisan association, heir of the early 19th-century National Romantic Geatish Society [*Götiska Förbundet*], and dedicated to prehistorical myths by emphasising heroised Viking ancestry and allusions to Norse mythology and imagery. The ideas expressed in its founding document included, amongst other things, national or racial rebirth and *Blut und Boden* configurations of farmers' organic connection with the soil.[52] The society instantly became a meeting place for intellectual national socialist sympathisers – amongst them professors, lawyers, engineers, priests, and officers – and part of an entangled Nordic fascism.[53]

The Hyperborean narrative arguably became most apparent in the Manhem Society's activities in the fall of 1935 when it was announced

in *Meddelanden från Samfundet Manhem* that Herman Wirth, president of the Study Society for Primordial History of Mind of "German Ancestral Heritage" [*Studiengesellschaft für Geistesurgeschichte "Deutsches Ahnenerbe", Ahnenerbe*], was about to hold a lecture for the society on 23 September on the topic of Sweden and the oldest history of Germanic spirit. Wirth was described in the announcement as a genius and fascinating researcher and as the founder of a "new world explanation theory".[54] It was claimed that his book *Der Aufgang der Menschheit* (1928), in which Wirth argues that Nordic culture originated in an Arctic-Atlantean high civilisation, justified his honorary title as "the Rudbeck of the twentieth century" because the book was a "new Atlantica" and that recent controversies regarding his theories had "unjustly" presented his "research name and scientific contribution in a crooked way".[55] In a heated discussion on Rudbeck's Atlantis theories amongst members of Manhem Society a week before Wirth's lecture, Pastor Nils Hannerz (1866–1951),[56] a co-founder of the society, suggested that questions regarding Atlantis were better suited to be answered by Wirth because of his "thorough knowledge of the subject".[57]

Wirth's nearly three-hour lecture, according to the society's report, was held in front of a full and representative audience in central Stockholm, including representatives of both science and art.[58] The event started with an introductory speech by Ernst Bernhard Almquist. Because of the opposition Wirth had faced as a result of his ideas outlined in numerous publications, Almquist noted that it is "natural that new theories, new experiences will cause resistance" and highlighted that Wirth's ideas were of "special value to us Nordic folks".[59] After Almquist's introductory speech, he gave the word to Herman Wirth. Wirth started the lecture by attacking contemporary "materialistic" science, claiming that the original Swedish science's "intimate contact with the ancient Nordic folk tradition" had fallen into oblivion because of the emergence of the modern European "rostrum science" [*katedervetenskap*] and rejecting ideas that Germanic culture originated in Asia.[60] Wirth identified runes as examples illustrating the Nordic origin of Germanic culture; runes were originally "cultic symbols and ideograms of a primordial Nordic mythos" but reduced by materialistic science into "mechanic symbols of letters and sounds".[61] He expressed to the audience that this shift in how to interpret runes' significance to the Nordic spirit might result in the "extinction of Nordic thought", the preservation of which must be maintained for pure-blooded Germanic peoples to once again rise as a culture-creating race. By stating that the Swedes, like most nations of Nordic origin, were a dying people, Wirth emphasised that they stand before a renaissance.[62] When the lecture ended, the audience rewarded him with lively applause.[63] Eric von Born (1897–1975) contributed to the following discussion by stating that it is the responsibility of the Christian church to obliterate what he claimed to be its prevailing Oriental character and to emphasise and develop the genuine and purified Nordic-Germanic mindset, which to him was compatible with the "true Christian religion".[64]

Leading members of the Manhem Society were influenced by the ideas outlined by Herman Wirth. Almquist wrote to Wirth a few months after the lecture, affirming that his presentation of "our Nordic forefathers with regard to life and religion, nature and God" had been "infinitely instructive".[65] Nils Hannerz, who had personal contacts with National Socialist theologians in Germany, such as Wolf Meyer-Erlach and Walter Grundmann,[66] incorporated Wirth's ideas a year before Wirth's visit into his teachings on "evangelic Nordic faith" [*evangelisk nordisk tro*]. Hannerz outlined his Evangelic Nordic faith in the pamphlet *Den levande gudens ord* (1934), positively reviewed in the German National Socialist magazine *Die Sonne*,[67] in which a plethora of different ideas were integrated, including the German liberal theological *Kulturprotestantismus* tradition, antisemitic and anti-Catholic thought, and notions of a specific Nordic racial soul, to demonstrate that *pure* or de-Judaised Christianity reflects *Germanic* tenets. Frequently lecturing on the topic for members of Manhem Society, Hannerz declared that Wirth had accomplished "extremely extensive research into the oldest religious conditions of humanity, 'Atlantean-Nordic primordial faith'".[68] Such temporal components through which pristine civilisations, primordial faith, and racial revival were interlocked contributed to envisioning a future Nordic racial utopia. It was, however, not only a topic that was discussed but one that was also put into practice. In Germany, the myth of a Nordic utopia lost to the sea served to establish research organisations, initiate archaeological expeditions, and finance pursuits for finding the Holy Grail.

Archaeological Expeditions and the Quest for the Holy Grail

Herman Wirth's lecture for the Manhem Society was part of an overarching German National Socialist mission to synthesise grandiose past and future utopias. At the SS headquarters in Berlin on 1 July 1935, Wirth and Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, amongst others, established the Ahnenerbe, which was devoted to the task of promoting the idea that Germans descended from a pristine race in the far north. Launched as a department of the SS Race and Settlement Main Office [*Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt*, RuSHA], the Ahnenerbe sought "to research the space, spirit and action of Nordic Indo-Europeanism", "to bring the research results into life and convey them to the German people" and "to call on every national comrade to participate in this [aim]".[69] By initiating holistic projects that were esoteric in the sense by seeking to maintain "the unity of the soul and life, spirit and blood, God and world as a precondition for a new Indo-Germanic worldview", Ahnenerbe personnel rejected Darwin's theory of evolution. This vision was aptly illustrated by Himmler, to whom Aryans did not evolve from apes as the rest of humanity but are gods who come directly from heaven to earth.[70] Cast in the tradition of Nordicism and partly based on Ariosophic thought, early Ahnenerbe projects sought to trace Nordic racial genealogy back to its prehistoric homeland.

Far from being a unitary *Weltanschauung*, German National Socialism was internally contradictory but coherent enough to hold together as an ideology. The basic idea of national/racial rebirth allowed for a wide range of visions to emerge, including racialised esoteric ideas about a supreme race first materialising in an ethereal Nordic habitat, which is to be discovered. While the Ahnenerbe can be included in this diverse esoteric current, it was not the sole state-sanctioned institute in Germany dedicated to such missions. Some of these missions were, however, initiated by the Rosenberg Office [*Amt Rosenberg*], headed by Alfred Rosenberg. Himmler and Rosenberg proposed separate interpretations of the racial foundations of National Socialism indented to serve as the regime's official version of the origin of the Nordic Aryan race. Rosenberg was more interested in mythology and folklore and Himmler in occultism, magic, and esotericism, but both emphasised interest in mythic prehistory and stressed the need to search for the cradle of the Germans' racial origins.[71] Himmler's notions of a super race that originated in the far north partly drew on books on German history and Norse mythology, such as the *Nibelungenlied* and the Eddas, introduced to him in his youth by his parents.[72] These early influences likely affected his envisioned goals for Ahnenerbe expeditions. "A *Volk* only lives happily in the present and future as long as they are aware of their past and the greatness of their ancestors", Himmler stressed in Ahnenerbe's monthly *Germanien* in 1936.[73] Considering Norse deities, such as Odin, Thor, and Loki "the earliest Aryans", "beings of pure, undiluted Nordic essence", and "possessors of superior knowledge", Himmler ordered Ahnenerbe researchers to find "all places in the northern Germanic Aryan world where an understanding of the lightning bolt, the thunderbolt, Thor's hammer, or the flying or thrown hammer exists".[74] This vision included Atlantis as an aboriginal Nordic civilisation from which every high culture throughout history was said to have descended.

Herman Wirth was a leading figure in the Ahnenerbe's early state-sanctioned missions. Unlike Himmler, he did not profess ideas on Nordic racial divinity but held a vital role in early Ahnenerbe projects aiming to find remnants of a primordial Nordic civilisation. Born in Utrecht in 1885, Wirth dedicated himself at an early stage to ideas promoted by the Völkisch Movement, received his doctorate in 1910 on the dissertation *Der Untergang des niederländischen Volksliedes*, and volunteered for military service in the German army at the outbreak of the First World War. He eventually moved to Germany after being dismissed from the service, and he joined the NSDAP in 1925; however, his membership was discontinued a year later, perhaps because of his unwillingness to scare off Jewish sponsors. He re-entered the party in 1933 and shortly thereafter became a member of Himmler's SS.[75]

A few years before re-joining the NSDAP, Wirth published *Der Aufgang der Menschheit*. The book was the product of Wirth's studies on ancient symbols carved into caves and rock formations from all over the world,

from which he claimed to have identified repeating patterns.[76] By highlighting the carvings' similarities, Wirth advocated that they were not a matter of simple coincidence, despite them being thousands of miles apart. Based on his interpretation of blood groups, the Eddas, the solstices, Vedic scriptures, and comparative linguistics, Wirth proposed a primordialist theory stating that the origins of Nordic culture lay in a lost, but traceable matriarchal Arctic-Atlantean high civilisation that encompassed North America and Northern Europe, whose inhabitants practiced a monotheistic *Ur-Religion* with the sun cross at its centre. When the continent sunk into the sea, its population spread across the northern hemisphere and developed petroglyphs, considered by Wirth to be the world's oldest symbolic and writing system which, if interpreted correctly, would expose the entire spiritual heritage of the Nordic race.[77] He anchored his ideas in the prevailing political landscape, probably marked by Germany's defeat in the First World War, by stressing that "awareness and renewal in the [German] spirit as the path of our blood will make us bring salvation and light to the world once again".[78] Ascertaining such findings were a case of "Nordic remembering" [*nordisches Erberinnern*] to Wirth; this means that racial revival presupposed that Nordic peoples recognised their ancestral spiritual-religious heritage, likely a modification of the Ariosophist concept of "spiritual genotype" [*geistige Erbmasse*].[79]

An expedition to the Swedish regions of Bohuslän and Östergötland under Wirth's lead was initiated a few days after the Ahnenerbe was established, the purpose of which was to examine petroglyphs there in order to acquire knowledge of the origin of the Nordic race.[80] In the first volume of *Die Heilige Urschrift der Menschheit* (1931), a sequel to *Der Aufgang der Menschheit*, Wirth declared that "the 'White Country' in the far north" was "the hearth and home of the first human culture".[81] Together with SS member Wilhelm Kottenrodt, Wirth made plaster casts of what he claimed to be "the most important cult-symbolic main motifs of the Neolithic and Bronze Age Swedish rock carvings" in these regions.[82] They stayed at the rectory of the national socialist-oriented Hallbäck family during their stay on the Swedish west coast. Daniel Hallbäck, the father of the family, was a priest who sympathised with but was not officially a member of an old church revivalist movement known as Schartauanism, whose political branch, the Clerical Peoples' Party [*Kyrkliga Folkpartiet*], had a positive attitude towards National Socialism at the time by considering it a weapon against "godless" Communism. The Hallbäck sons, Sven-Axel and Hans-Henrik, established their own contacts with Ahnenerbe personnel after Wirth's visit.[83] Hoping that he could present his expedition results after returning to Berlin, Wirth planned a public exhibition entitled "Aboriginal Nordic Farmer Culture According to Swedish Petroglyphs". However, because of the opposition he faced from Richard Walther Darré, who was of the opinion that Wirth's religious interpretations would cause political difficulties, the exposition never took place.[84]

Instead of a public exhibition, Herman Wirth arranged a movie screening for Heinrich Himmler in February 1936. Himmler was enthused, and a second expedition with a similar aim as the previous excursion was financed to take place in the summer, this time to both Sweden and Norway.[85] After a first stop in Bohuslän, the expedition crew, consisting of Wirth and five other SS members, crossed the Norwegian border on 31 August. The crew made castings of petroglyphs at Solberg, Beitstad, and Rødøy in Nordland. Wirth was also permitted to complete castings at the museum in Trondheim.[86]

Herman Wirth's two expeditions were not the only Ahnenerbe attempts to locate an aboriginal Nordic civilisation. To identify other possible locations of such a civilisation, Himmler and other Ahnenerbe figures amalgamated visions of a supreme prehistoric culture with World Ice Theory. Such ideas contributed to inspiring theories that remnants of a pristine Nordic racial civilisation existed in today's Helgoland, Iceland, and Tibet. To Himmler, for instance, World Ice Theory confirmed the existence of a prehistoric Atlantean civilisation in the Himalayas because the Atlanteans' racial purity had been preserved by the elite racial castes there.[87]

Other ventures in the Nordic countries conducted by Ahnenerbe personnel were not embedded in the Hyperborean narrative to the same extent as the ideas promoted by Himmler and Wirth, but they nonetheless stepped into the Nordicist tradition as they sought to determine that the Nordic race originated in the extreme north. Yrjö von Grönhagen (1911–2003), recruited by Himmler to the Ahnenerbe in 1935 largely because of his writings on Kalevala folklore, explored pagan rituals and folk songs in Karelia to ascertain parallels between Indo-Europeans and Finns and to settle that they were of a common origin.[88] After von Grönhagen's first expedition to the region in 1936, Himmler and other leading Ahnenerbe members planned to assign the Norwegian ethnographer and Nordic Ring [*Nordischer Ring*] member Christian Leden (1882–1957) a similar mission in Norway.[89] When Indologist Walther Wüst succeeded Wirth as president of the Ahnenerbe in 1937, whereby the institute was converted into a more efficient research organisation, von Grönhagen became increasingly marginalised and ousted. Nevertheless, he continued the *Blut und Boden* configuration of Finnish nature by stressing that farmers embodied the Finns' loyalty and organic connection with the soil.[90] Another venture was the mid-1930s archaeological fieldwork at the Haithabu site, an important Danish Viking Age trading settlement which included German and Scandinavian archaeologists. Even though the Haithabu project was not part of the Ahnenerbe, there were connections between the institute and excavations at the site. Himmler had taken a personal interest in Haithabu in the early 1930s and visited it in March 1937, led by the later high-ranking Ahnenerbe member Herbert Jankuhn (1905–1990), to whom the village was "the bridge between the West Germanic to the Northern Germanic culture circle" and "the greatest monument of the early Germanic times".[91]

The Hyperborean narrative as promoted by German fascists dedicated to esoteric thought was articulated not only in terms of a lost primordial Nordic civilisation but also as a weaponry source that would lead Germany to victory in a future war. The European political environment was successively destabilised after the NSDAP's seizure of power. German military rearmament began when Adolf Hitler pulled Germany out of the World Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations in October 1933, the Saarland voted to become part of Germany in January 1935, and in the following year, Hitler signed the Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan, a non-aggression agreement with Benito Mussolini, and ordered to remilitarise the Rhineland.[92] As Europe was on the brink of a new war, Himmler searched for alternative weapons that would grant the German *Volk* with supernatural powers. In the mid-1930s, SS-Brigadeführer Karl Maria Wiligut (1866–1946), who designed the symbolism of the SS ring and advocated Atlantis theories, introduced him to the book *Kreuzzug gegen den Gral* (1933), in which its author Otto Rahn (1904–1939) discusses the Cathars, the legendary keepers of the Holy Grail, as practisers of a religion originally invented in Nordic Atlantis.[93] Finding the grail would make it the principal weapon in times of war because it, in Rahn's words, "represents the fulfilment of all worldly desires: in other words, Paradise. He who beholds it will never die".[94]

Otto Rahn had studied medieval literature and archaeology after the First World War and developed a fascination for the Cathars, a medieval sect that advocated the Gnostic idea of two equivalent deistic principles – the God of the New Testament as the creator of the spiritual realm and the God of the Old Testament as the creator of the physical world – and, for that, was persecuted and then eradicated by the Roman Catholic Church. He highlighted the poem *Parzival* depicting the Arthurian hero Percival and his search for the Holy Grail. To Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels, who, like Rahn, found interest in the grail after reading the *Parzival* poem, the grail was one of the cornerstones of his Ordo Novi Templi, established in 1900 and modelled on the Knights Templar. Liebenfels, to whom the grail was a metaphor for an esoteric Christianity – the primordial Aryan *Ur-Religion* – that emerged amongst a diluvial race on Atlantis and was preserved by the Templars, represented one esoteric approach to the grail.[95] Rahn had a more practical approach, seeking to find the physical grail. Inspired by the 19th-century German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann, who discovered the real city of Troy by following clues in Homer's *The Iliad*, Rahn searched for clues in the *Parzival* poem. His quest eventually brought him to the mountain Montségur in the French Pyrenees, where the Cathars made their last stand. As Rahn explored the surroundings of the mountain, he became convinced that the heretics were not Christians but were interconnected with Buddhism and the grail by an Indo-European Gnostic tradition.[96]

The Ahnenerbe officially sponsored Rahn's subsequent expeditions. He was offered work as a consultant at the RuSHA and was elected

SS-Unterscharführer. SS researchers, such as Rudolf Mund, praised his ideas, as they were said to validate theories that the medieval church pursued a systematic elimination of Aryans who had survived the collapse of Atlantis.[97] Between 1935 and 1936, Rahn travelled extensively through Europe, from Spain to Iceland. He recorded his journeys in his second book, *Luzifers Hofgesind* (1937), an enigmatic travel diary describing Lucifer as the Aryan purveyor of light, whereby the Cathars became Luciferian *light bearers*. Chief of Personal Staff Reichsführer-SS Karl Wolff ordered an edition of the book in luxury ribbon on Himmler's behalf as a gift for Hitler on his 48th birthday.[98] Following ideas developed in the Ariosophic tradition, Rahn applied his search for the Holy Grail to the Hyperborean narrative. He claimed that the north was the ancient home of the Aryan race and that such knowledge was hidden in Nordic mythologies, to him meaning Norse, ancient Greek, and Maya traditions. As for Mayas as Aryan descendants, for instance, Rahn stated, "It was from the north, the land of Tulla or Tullan, that the ancestors of the ancient Mexican people, the Toltecs, are said to have come. […] This Toltec Tulla corresponds perfectly to the mysterious island of Thule".[99] Considering ancient Aryan myths "inseparable from the power of gods" and a "spiritual association" between Aryans and the divine, Aryan blood would eventually lose its spiritual significance and silence its ancestors if this spiritual relationship was not maintained.[100] Rahn seems to have been certain that the Cathars were aware of their sanguine powers, materialised in the grail as an element created by the northern gods. He declared that the power of Aryan blood "unified all humans from the most diverse regions and nations, but of the same race and the same origin. Following the age-old Aryan myths, we call this strength Aryan power".[101]

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has analysed how interwar Nordic esoteric fascists utilised the myth of Atlantis, so intimately linked to the "Nordic" in Nordic fascism, to stress that the Nordic race originated in a mythical continent in the far north and to acknowledge that this myth was based on the divine unity of the Nordic race and its racial soul. By identifying the basic idea of this aspiration as the Hyperborean narrative, the chapter has outlined these ideas in three parts: first, by displaying how the myth of Atlantis was successively racialised, from Plato to Blavatsky's Theosophy and the racialised esoteric current commonly known as Ariosophy; second, by highlighting how fascists in Nordic countries have applied the Hyperborean narrative, with a certain emphasis on the Manhem Society; and, third, by describing how the Ahnenerbe applied the Hyperborean narrative in its early years and how the organisation's members connected this idea with quests of finding the Holy Grail.

Far from being a historical parenthesis, Nordic fascist ideas about the divine unity of the Nordic race and its racial soul took a new turn after

the Second World War. In the recent decade, the Nordic fascist publishing house Arktos has, for instance, republished Porus Homi Havewala's five-volume *The Saga of the Aryan Race* (2011–2012), originally published in the Mumbai newspaper *Jam-e-Jamshed* between 1987 and 1992, the first volume of which describes the ancient Aryans' migration from their "homeland at the North Pole" to the south.[102] In *Drömmen om ultima thule* (2011), another Arktos publication, the author describes "Germanic utopias" in terms of "transcendental ideas and ideals among poets, thinkers, and artists who, whether they have realised it or not, in their actions have expressed the *higher* mentality of Nordic European man".[103] Ordo Novi Templi, a contemporary reincarnation of Liebenfels' initiatory society, declares on its website, *Ariosophie*, that "the struggle of Ariosophy is a struggle of humanity against the animal humanity [*Tiermenschentum*], it is a heroic and bloody struggle, worthy of being immortalised in a new Nibelungenlied".[104] In a similar manner, the new alternative racial religion of Aryanity seeks to unify white Pagans and Christians under a comprehensive ideology whose starting point is that the cradle of Aryan race was a lost civilisation of great technological and mystical strength.[105]

These examples illustrate a continuity that extends pre-fascist and interwar fascist esoteric thought into the present day. While esoteric ideas also exist in non- and anti-fascist contexts and traditions, Ariosophists and esoteric fascists have adjusted and modified such ideas to project the Faustian mission and bring about a new order through the palingenesis of the historically, culturally, and racially shaped organic nation, thereby aspiring what Roger Griffin identifies as fascism's pursuit for an alternative modernity.[106] Locating the origin of the Nordic race in an ethereal habitat in the extreme north, trespassing boundaries between the physical world and the divine and searching for imagined supernatural objects, such as the Holy Grail, all enabled esoteric fascists to strengthen the notion of the Nordic race as superior or divine. In that regard, esoteric fascist depictions of a mythical homeland in the far north served as both a grandiose utopia and an idealised past. They were utopic by anticipating a re-divinised Nordic race, idealised by antedating the future through the past. This synthesis of the past and the future, whereby the present becomes an interregnum to a new order and enables one to rethink the "Nordic" in Nordic fascism as not only referring to a geographical region but also to an aspired re-instalment of a paradise lost.

Notes

1 The analysed empirical material uses various racial categories, predominately Nordic, Germanic, and Aryan. While advocates of these respective categories tended to differ in whom to include into the supreme white race, they all agreed on the point that a distinct *ethnos* originated in prehistoric times in the far north. For that reason, I use the category "Nordic race" on the analytical level (and when it was used by the actors themselves), and I use "Germanic" and "Aryan" only when the sources explicitly speak about such categories.

2 Kurlander, "Atlantis," 81–101; Goodrick-Clarke, *Occult Roots*, 52–54, 101–102, 144–146, 156–160; Godwin, *Atlantis*, 117–156; Wegener, *Das atlantidische Weltbild*, 27–118.
3 Griffin, "Fixing Solutions," 5–23; Lundström and Poletti Lundström, "Radical-Nationalist Podcasting," 196–199.
4 Staudenmaier, "Racial Ideology," 473–491; Gillette, *Racial Theories*, 154–175.
5 Battersby, *Holy Book*, 3–4.
6 Pelley, *Our Religious Heritage*, 3–22.
7 Gardell, *Gods of the Blood*.
8 Karcher and Lundström, "The Nature of Nordic Fascism."
9 Gardell, "Esoteric Nordic Fascism." Scholarly discussions on how to define esotericism are ongoing and heated. Recent nuanced approaches are offered in Asprem, and Strube (eds.), *New Approaches*.
10 Plato, *Timaeus and Critias*, 13–100, 107–128.
11 Neville, "Gothicism," 218–219; Godwin, *Atlantis*, 8–9.
12 Donnelly, *Atlantis*.
13 Warren, *Paradise Found*.
14 Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism*, 40–41.
15 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, 87.
16 Ibid., 80–81.
17 Ibid., 553–554.
18 Ibid., 819 (italics in original).
19 Ibid., 553–554.
20 Esoteric fascists were to incorporate this temporal aspect differently. Some promoted a *resurrectionist* conception of time, meaning that racial revival was interpreted in linear terms that were about to end in a re-divinised Aryan world rule, whereas others pushed for a more thorough *cyclical* conception of time. On cyclical fascist temporality, see Gardell, "Esoteric Nordic Fascism."
21 Sedgwick, *Against the Modern World*, 43–44; Goodrick-Clarke, *Occult Roots*, 22, 29.
22 Petander, "Theosophy in Sweden," 578–579; Kraft, "Theosophy in Norway," 570; Dybdal, "Theosophy in Denmark," 545; Granholm, "Theosophy in Finland," 564. The first Icelandic branch of Theosophy was founded in 1912, whereas the first Icelandic department of the Theosophical Society was established in 1921. Halink, "Quest of Gangleri," 195.
23 The German word *Volk* is difficult to translate into English. In this context, it refers to "the people" in racialised terms.
24 On the *Völkisch* Movement, see Puschner, *Die völkische Bewegung*; Puschner, Schmitz, and Ulbricht (eds.), *Handbuch zur "Völkischen Bewegung."*
25 List, *Rita der Ario-Germanen*, 19–20; List, *Bilderschrift der Ario-Germanen*, 30–31; List, *Ursprache der Ario-Germanen*, 19–24.
26 List, *Bilderschrift der Ario-Germanen*, 30.
27 Daim, *Der Mann*, 31–66; Goodrick-Clarke, *Occult Roots*, 90, 192–202; Kurlander, *Hitler's Monsters*, 3–4, 20–22. Cf. Paape, *Im Wahn des Auserwähltseins*, 252–264.
28 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, 1188.
29 Liebenfels, *Theozoologie*, 3–160; Liebenfels, *Theosophie*, 5–31.
30 Liebenfels, *Bibliomystikon*, 35–48; Liebenfels, "Der Weltfriede," 17.
31 Liebenfels, *Bibliomystikon*, 86–107; Liebenfels, "Die Ostara," 2; Liebenfels, "Urheimat," 1–16.
32 Liebenfels, *Bibliomystikon*, 98–99.
33 Liebenfels, "Die Weltrevolution," 1.
34 Gorsleben, *Hoch-Zeit*, 199–219; Wieland, *Atlantis*, 1–6; Schmid, *Urtexte*, 15–18.

35 Liebenfels, "Der Weltkrieg," 1; Liebenfels, "Die Weltrevolution," 1, 8; Liebenfels, "Urheimat," 3.
36 Goodrick-Clarke, *Occult Roots*, 135–152, quotation on p. 145 (Goodrick-Clarke's translation).
37 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, viii, xxix–xxxi.
38 Rosenberg, *Mythus*, 25.
39 Emberland, "Zeichen der Hagal-Rune," 524–525. Such views were at times also expressed in *Den Svenske Nationalsocialisten*, organ for the National Socialist Workers' Party [*Nationalsocialistiska Arbetarepartiet*]. See, e.g., "Germansk kungamakt," 3.
40 *Nationen*, 6 June 1932, 4–5.
41 Riksarkivet Marieberg (RA), Elof Eriksson, volume 2, Elof Eriksson to Julius Holmberg, 14 February 1935.
42 Arman, *Kristendomen*, 4.
43 Ibid.
44 See, e.g., *Nationen*, 7 October 1927, 3; *Nationen*, 1 June 1932, 4–5; *Nationen*, 1 February 1933, 5. Liebenfels is mentioned by name in *Nationen*, 1 December 1933, 4.
45 Liebenfels, "Urheimat," 10; Liebenfels, "Das arische Christentum," 1, 4, 14.
46 Hallberg, "En svensk nationalsocialism," 10.
47 The SM is analysed at length in Berggren, *Blodets renhet*, 172–303.
48 Carlberg, *Mera ljus*, 4; *Nationen*, 8 February 1931, 1.
49 Almquist, *Budskapet*, 5–6.
50 Lindsström, *Världsisläran*, 5–8.
51 "Litteratur," 3.
52 *Stiftelseurkund för Manhem*, 9–33.
53 Various SM documents describing who had held lectures within its organisational frames include names such as Eric von Born, Axel Gadolin, Johannes Sundwall, Gunnar Lindqvist, and Lyoka Rosberg (Finland), as well as Per Imerslund and Walter Fyrst (Norway). See, e.g., Samfundet Manhem, *Manhems föreläsningar*, 3–12.
54 "Professor Herman Wirth," 2–3.
55 Ibid., 2–3.
56 Hannerz was ordained a priest in the Church of Sweden but did not practice the ecclesiastical profession, meaning that he was referred to as a *pastor* and not a *priest*.
57 "Olof Rudbeck," 2.
58 "Professor Herman Wirths föredrag," 1.
59 Ibid., 1.
60 "Sverige," 10–11.
61 Ibid., 11.
62 Ibid., 13.
63 Ibid., 14.
64 "Professor Herman Wirths föredrag," 2. On von Born's post-1945 fascist activities, see Kotonen, "Window to Europe."
65 NARA T 580 198/560, Ernst Bernhard Almquist to Herman Wirth, 1 November 1935, cited in Löw, *Gottessohn*, 158.
66 Gerdmar, "Germanentum als Überideologie," 282–283.
67 Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek (ARAB), C. E. Carlberg, box 3, file 1, press cutting of *Die Sonne* 5, 1935.
68 Hannerz, *Levande gudens ord*, 17–18.
69 Reischle, "Deutsche Ahnenerbe," 337.
70 Kater, *"Ahnenerbe" der SS*, 49–50.

71 Ibid., 21, 139–144.
72 Pringle, *Master Plan*, 16–20; Kater, *"Ahnenerbe" der SS*, 17–18.
73 Himmler, "Zum Geleit," 193.
74 Pringle, *Master Plan*, 80.
75 On Wirth's life, research, and political activities until 1945, apart from his Ahnenerbe expeditions, see Löw, *Gottessohn*, 29–86.
76 See Wirth, *Aufgang der Menschheit*, Appendix 1–5.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid., 626.
79 Wirth, *Aufgang der Menschheit*, 22; Löw, *Gottessohn*, 202–204.
80 Löw, *Gottessohn*, 147.
81 Wirth, *Heilige Urschrift*, 7.
82 Löw, *Gottessohn*, 148–151.
83 Bundesarchiv (BArch), NS, box 21, file 682, Bruno Galke to Karl Wolff, 28 April 1937; BArch, NS, box 21, file 682, "Bericht über den Besuch der drei jungen Schweden in Deutschland," 16 November 1937.
84 Löw, *Gottessohn*, 155–156.
85 Löw, *Gottessohn*, 166–167; BArch, NS, box 21, file 682, "Kostenvoranschlag für die Forschungsfahrt 1936 des 'Deutschen Ahnenerbes' […] in Schweden und Norwegen," 1936.
86 Emberland and Kott*, Himmlers Norge*, 85–86.
87 Kurlander, "Atlantis," 91–93; Kurlander, *Hitler's Monsters*, 30–31. On the SS expedition to Tibet, see Pringle, *Master Plan*, 145–176.
88 See, e.g., Grönhagen, "Karelische Zauberbeschwörungen," 54–57.
89 Emberland and Kott*, Himmlers Norge*, 184. On the Nordic Ring, see Karcher, "Schirmorganisation der Nordischen Bewegung," 7–35; Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung," 63–97.
90 Grönhagen, *Finnische Gespräche*, 31–36; Pringle, *Master Plan*, 96–98.
91 Link and Hare, "Pseudoscience Reconsidered," 117.
92 Evans, *Third Reich*, 618–641.
93 Kurlander, "Atlantis," 83, 94.
94 Rahn, *Lucifer's Court*, 23.
95 Liebenfels, "Der heilige Gral," 3–15; Goodrick-Clarke, *Occult Roots*, 106–108.
96 Kurlander, *Hitler's Monsters*, 173–174.
97 Goodrick-Clarke, *Occult Roots*, 189; Kurlander, *Hitler's Monsters*, 175.
98 BArch, NS, box 19, file 688, Schwarzhäupter Verlag to Karl Wolff, 17 April 1937.
99 Rahn, *Lucifer's Court*, 150.
100 Ibid., 230, 236.
101 Ibid., 151–152.
102 Havewala, *Saga*.
103 Holm, *Drömmen*, 7 (italics in original).
104 Ordo Novi Templi, "Tabularium."
105 Starfire, *Aryanity*.
106 Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism*.

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6 Esoteric Nordic Fascism

The Second Coming of Hitler and the Idea of the People

Mattias Gardell

During the first years of the Second World War, the Axis powers looked invincible. War fortunes seemed to confirm the myth of Aryan supremacy. When realities on the ground reversed, and the fascist regimes collapsed, shocked believers across the world reacted with widespread disbelief. How was it possible? Struggling with the need to reconcile expectations with experienced reality, finding themselves totally discredited in mainstream opinion, and effectively blocked from returning to power and public political life if they refused to change skin, a segment of remaining fascists turned inwards into a world of mysticism. Said Chilean diplomat and occultist Miguel Serrano,[1] who developed the dark undercurrent of esoteric Hitlerism [*hitlerismo esoterico*]: "After the war and its *apparent* loss, there was no other way for Hitlerism than the esoteric development [italics mine]".[2]

The esoteric interpretation of fascism Serrano refers to is the terrain this chapter explores, with a focus on occult Nordicism. As these concepts – fascism, Nordic, occult, and esoteric – are possible to interpret in multiple ways, I will briefly indicate how they will be used here. By "fascism", I mean a variety of revolutionary radical nationalisms aiming at national rebirth.[3] In the United States, especially, the radical nationalism I investigate is typically labelled "white nationalism". "Nordic" is the name given to the nation whose rebirth the fascists we will meet in this chapter seek to achieve. The Nordic nation could be conceived of in terms of inherited race, culture, or spirit, or a combination thereof, and is associated with a habitat that Nordic fascists locate in "the North". "Occult" signifies that the knowledge this fascism seeks, adherents claim, is hidden [Lat. *occultus*] to all but those initiated into the secret, "esoteric", teachings [Greek *esōterikós*, from *esōtérō*, "further inside"; *eso*, "within/inside"], such as the hidden knowledge of the divinity of the Nordic race.[4]

Esoteric fascism is a world set apart, yet familiar from literature, film, and art. As if a theme park, it has certain attractions that make it immediately recognisable as a world of wonder and magic. There are sunken continents and lost civilisations (Lemuria, Atlantis), hidden cities (Agartha, Shambhala), mystic abodes (the Inner Earth, Hyperborea, Ultima Thule), and ancient sanctuaries (pyramids, temples, ceremonial grounds). There are legendary

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sages and holy men (King Arthur, Merlin, Jesus, Buddha, Akhenaton, Pythagoras, Plato), sacred guardians (the Knights Templar, the Cathars, the Watchers), mythic creatures (the bird Phoenix, dragons, demons, gods and goddesses), things to do (hero quests, soul journeys, near death experiences), charged objects and powerful symbols (the Grail, the Philosopher's Stone, the Black Sun, the Spear of Destiny, Runes, the Pentagram, Mandalas), and scores of gnostic sages, undead, avatars, extra-terrestrials, pagans, and initiatory societies.

Of course, all elements above also figure in other contexts and traditions but are given their (hidden) meaning in esoteric Nordic fascism through how they are being connected to each other and to the fate of race and nation. The sage who seeks a position in the world of esoteric fascism needs to make it his or her own by outlining its features and referring to seminal thinkers traversing the terrain before, including Theosophy founder Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung, and radical traditionalist Julius Evola. When the ground is laid, the magus is expected to present his or her own take of how it all fits together, and what that means to the survival and expansion of the glorious Nordic race and nation.

The world of esoteric Nordic fascism may be modest in terms of numbers of adherents, yet houses a bewildering array of traditions, interpreters, and visionaries, not all of whom go well together. Many of its strands have a history that predates the rise of fascism to power, as shown by Gustaf Forsell in this volume,[5] and the milieu took on renewed significance in the post-war era, not least by interpreting the hidden meaning of fascism's "apparent loss".

In this chapter, I will focus on three milieus with a strong occult and esoteric bent that gained importance in the wider political landscape of Nordic radical nationalism after 1945: firstly, esoteric Hitlerism; secondly, racist Norse paganism; and thirdly, extreme black, occult, pagan metal. The first two milieus are isms, the third a music scene. Beyond its empirical explorations, this chapter seeks to contribute to the conversation of comparative fascism studies by reflecting on populism, elitism, and the role of "the People" in fascist thought and practice.

The Return of Hitler as the Avatar of Kalki

"There was an exoteric National Socialism until 1945", Serrano explained in an interview with the Italian esoteric fascist site *Sole Nero*. "After this date, at the end of the War, what followed was the esoteric Hitlerism, which nobody will be able to stop now because it is the 'constellation' and revelation of an Archetype which was incarnated in the person of Adolf Hitler, who is immortal".[6] According to Serrano, the fall of fascism at the end of the war represents the Twilight of the Gods, *Ragnarök*, when the Fenris wolf devours everything, even Wotan, and ushers in the Wolf Age, the Iron Age,

Kali Yuga; the last, most material, and depraved of all eras, for example, the dark time we now live in. It will end in the final apocalypse, when Hitler will return as Kalki, the Destroyer of filth.[7] "He will awaken the dream, infuse heroism in those that remain loyal – and He will save the Race". Hitler may have lost a battle, but he did not lose the war.[8]

Serrano's conviction that Hitler will return as Kalki, the tenth avatar of Vishnu in Vaishnavite Hindu tradition, was indebted to Savitri Devi, who was the first national socialist to identify Hitler as an avatar of Vishnu, and insert fascism in the Hindu theory of cyclical time.[9] Savitri Devi (b. Maximiani Portas, 1905–1982) was a fascist intellectual raised in the Greek exile community in Lyons, who mastered English, French, Modern Greek, Italian, German, Icelandic, Hindi, and Bengali, and had working knowledge of some 20 other languages, including Ancient Greek, Urdu, and Sanskrit. Having completed her PhD in Philosophy, Devi lived in India from 1932 to 1945, working as a writer, a Hindutva lecturer, and, during the war, a Japanese spy. She married Asit Krishna Mukherji, a highly educated Brahmin, and editor of the most influential national socialist magazine in India (financed by the German consulate in Calcutta), before it eventually was banned by the British authorities.

Mukherji was part of a radical Hindu nationalist milieu that in the 1930s was thrilled by observing the rise of a central European power under the sign of *their* symbol, the swastika.[10] This milieu traces its roots to the exclusively Hindu-oriented independence movement at the *fin de siècle*, not least to the thoughts of Brahmin Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856–1920), who stood by the landed elite, patriarchy, and the caste system against the reformist, pluralist, secular, Muslim, and socialist factions of the anticolonial movement.[11] A champion of the alleged Hinduness of the Indian nation, Tilak found its national character rooted in the Hindu scriptures, the ancient Vedas, and the epics *Ramayana*, the account of the heroic Aryan warrior-caste, the Kshatriyas, and *Mahabharata*, which describes the effort of the northern Aryan tribes to unite the warlords and their chiefdoms into a mighty empire, and tells the story of the hero-god Krishna, the eight avatar of Vishnu, who feature prominently in one of Mahabharata's most popular books, *Bhagavad Gita*. Tilak argued that the oldest of these sacred scriptures, the *Vedas*, was written in Ultima Thule, the arctic homeland of the Aryan race, long before the Aryans migrated south and conquered present-day India (and Iran), citing both *Rigveda* and (the Zoroastrian) *Avesta*, for proof of a lost Aryan paradise (the Iranian *Airyanem Vaejah*) in the North Pole region. Interestingly, Tilak's magnum opus, *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*, was rediscovered by white nationalists in the 21st century and reissued by *Arktos*, the Nordic fascist publisher, in 2011.[12]

To Savitri Devi, Hinduism was the only living Aryan tradition in the decaying modern world, its vibrant Aryan paganism reflecting rays of Satya Yuga, the Golden Age. As a Force of Light, it stood against the Semitic Forces of Darkness, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. During the Age of

Truth, when "everything was as it should be", the social and political order on earth was a "perfect replica of the eternal Order of Life", Devi writes, in which "every man and woman, every race, every species, was in its place, and the whole divine hierarchy of Creation was a work of art".[13] With the turning wheel of history followed a succession of increasingly depraved ages until we reach Kali Yuga, the present era of man-centred materialism, liberty, egalitarianism, democracy, selfishness, and deceit, which is bound to end in a total cataclysm that will give birth to a new Golden Age.

Within this revolving cycle of cosmic ages, Savitri Devi inserted an original doctrine of divine incarnations in relation to cosmic time: Men *in* Time, Men *Above* Time, and Men *Against* Time. Men *in* Time possesses the godlike splendour of the devastating forces of nature with a glaring selfishness that reflects all the vicissitudes of Kali Yuga and is totally separated from the divine Whole. The Man *in* Time has no ideology other than himself; he is the master of absolute destruction, the Lightening in the title of her book, exemplified by Genghis-Khan. Men *Above* Time reflects the Golden Age ideals of Satya Yuga and lives a special life separated from the decaying material world, an inner life of discipline, and spiritual, moral, and physical perfection. Men Above Time may act as saviours, but only of individual souls and they never seek to transform the whole order in accordance with Golden Age ideals; they are the Sun in Savitri Devi's parlance and are represented by Akhenaton, and Buddha. Men *Against* Time is simultaneously the Lightening *and* the Sun; as embodiments of the highest ideals of Satya Yuga, they use the brutal force of total destruction to terminate all the filth of Kali Yuga to pave the way for the dawn of the new Golden Age.[14] To Savitri Devi, Adolf Hitler was a Man Against Time, the "most heroic of the heroes" that had stood in the way of the world's downward rush to its doom.[15] However, Hitler was too benign to unleash the brutal force necessary to terminate international Jewry. A harder Man Against Time than Hitler was needed to defeat the coalesced forces of our Dark Age, and Savitri Devi awaited his second coming as Kalki.

Hitler knew that he was not the last Man Against Time, Savitri Devi claims, as evidenced by a statement Hitler gave in conversation with Hans Grimm in 1928: "I know that some Man capable of giving our problems a final solution must appear […]. And that is why I have set myself to do the preparatory work […] for I know that I am myself, not the One".[16]

After 1945, Savitri Devi returned to Europe to complete her book and to get in contact with the scattered remnants of the national socialist milieu. She partook in underground rescue operations to shuttle top Third Reich echelons and their collaborators to safe havens, predominantly in Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, and Brazil, also Egypt. In 1958, *The Lightening and the Sun* was published, and Savitri Devi quickly became a name in occult fascist circles. Two years later, she became a founding member of the World Union of National Socialists (WUNS), which, to the difference of the competing Venice, Rome, Malmö, and Zurich fascist Internationals, abstained

from searching to revive fascism by adopting "another name, another face", retaining instead all the trappings of classical, Third Reich, National Socialism with uniforms, swastika armbands, banners, rituals, and ceremonies, which, bereft of state power, quickly took on the resemblance of a cult.

To Lincoln Rockwell, legendary founder of American Nazi Party and co-founder of WUNS, national socialism was a "new religion" to which he "converted" after a series of nocturnal encounters with Hitler in the early 1950s; a notion that was accentuated further by his successor Matt Koehl, following Rockwell's assassination in 1967. Transforming the party into a "community of faith", a "spiritual SS", named the (Holy) New Order, Koehl announced that God descended to the world in the shape of Adolf Hitler. "In rejecting him, we rejected God himself", Koehl said, before announcing "the good news of our age": "our immortal Leader" has "risen from the grave. He lives!"[17] In tune with the teachings of Savitri Devi, Koehl in a ritual let Hitler speak with the tongue of *Bhagavad Gita*: "Age after age, when justice is crushed, when evil reigns supreme, I come; again am I born on Earth to save the world".[18]

Besides Savitri Devi, Miguel Serrano is arguably one of the more influential post-war esoteric fascist thinkers. A man of letters and many languages, Serrano incorporates elements from Hindu, Buddhist, Daoist, Zoroastrian, Norse, Mayan, Aztec, Incan, and Mapuche scriptures and mythologies as original Aryan sources in his grandiose hierohistory, as outlined in more than 50 books, including the seminal *Elella. Libro del amor mágico* (1972); *Nos, libro de la resurrección* (1980); and the pivotal Esoteric Hitlerism trilogy *El Cordón Dorado: hitlerismo esotérico* (1974); *Adolf Hitler, el último avatãra* (1984); and *Manú, por el hombre que vendrá* (1991). According to Serrano, Aryan man, the White Gods of the North, sons of the Black Sun, the Æsir and the Vanir, had an extraterrestrial origin in the spiritual Hyperborea. Entering the Manichean war against the Demiurge Yahweh, the god who rules the material Earth, the white gods materialised in a northern high civilisation, Asgård or Ultima Thule, at the North Pole. During Satya Yuga, the white gods of Asgård began to spiritualise earth and developed consciousness-raising techniques, including various forms of Kundalini Yoga, through which man in subsequent and increasingly depraved cosmic ages could reconnect with their Hyperborean nature and reascend into divinity. After the cataclysm that ended Satya Yuga and gave birth to Treta Yuga, some Aryan gods relocated to Agartha and Shambhala in the Inner Earth through entries in the Himalayas and the Gobi Desert, while others set out to conquer the world and laid the foundation of all the impressive high civilisations in the ancient world, of which pyramids, temple ruins, lost cities, sculptures, and age-old sacred scriptures bear witness. Subsequently, these high civilisations were all corrupted by race-mixing and fell, which was part of the downward spiral all the way down to the increasingly rottener Kali Yuga.

Serrano, like Devi, awaits the second manifestation of the Archetype that first came as Hitler but arrives at this conclusion through another route. Instead of her theory of Men In, Above, and Against Time, Serrano develops a grand theory of involution, eternal return, resurrection, and correspondences, which incorporates elements familiar from esoteric traditions, including Druidry, Wotanism, Rosicrucianism, Arthurianism, Gnosticism, the Cathars, and the Knights Templar. Turning Darwin's theory of evolution around, Serrano claims that cosmos with all its life-forms and ages are set in a process of eternal decline, or *involution*. Man is not descended from apes, but the other way around. Man, in his original form during the Golden Age, was a race of Gods and Goddesses. As the Golden Age turned into the Silver, Bronze, and Iron Age, respectively, Gods became Men, Apes, and finally the soulless Consumer-Drones in our age of equal mediocracy. Reincarnation does not signify the return of particular individuals, as people in the ego-centric Iron Age tend to believe, but the return of all characters and events of the grand cosmic drama that is replayed over and over again, differing only in outward appearance reflecting the particular stage at the particular Age in which the reoccurrence manifests. Accordingly, the Archetype that manifested as Hitler is bound to return, in the same, only yet more brutal, role, to reflect the yet more deprived times of his next reoccurrence, as he then will manifest at the final stage of Kali Yuga as Kalki the Destroyer, to terminate the Age of Filth and usher in Satya Yuga anew.

Within this setting, Serrano inserts the Hermetic Law of correspondences: "As above, so below; as inside, so outside". Thus, like and unalike are the same; up is down, north is south. From this follows that we need to search for the mythic North in the extreme South. The mystic disappearance of the White Gods of the arctic Atlantis from their original location above the North Pole points to their relocation below the South Pole, with the gateway to the Inner Earth located somewhere in Antarctica. Serrano claims to be an initiate of an esoteric order of gnostic masters; the Order of the Serpent, in which Hitler too was an initiate.[19] This elite order of spiritual warriors is led by masters from Atlantis nowadays based in the subterranean Aryan Kingdom where "the Solar Golden Age still exists", and "Hitler, young again, still lives".[20]

In 1947/1948, Serrano was invited to join the Chilean military/scientific expedition into the immense Chilean Antarctica [*Antártica Chilena*], when Chile secured its permanent presence of the territory by establishing the military bases of Soberanía Base and Bernando O'Higgins. Travelling as a reporter for *El Mercurio*, Serrano sought for warmwater oases amidst the ice, and for the entrance to the underworld, and has since assured the world that there is something there.[21]

While Devi has been a significant reference in the occult fascist universe since the late 1950s, and her ashes are kept in a national socialist shrine next to Lincoln Rockwell's in the American Nazi Party's old headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, she has become ever-more prominent since the

turn of the millennium; her name, appearance, thoughts, texts, quotes circulating along with Savitri Devi merchandise and online memes. Serrano, writing less accessible and in Spanish, initially was conversant with a more limited number of significant thinkers in radical traditionalist, occult fascist, and western esoteric circles, including Hermann Hesse, Carl G. Jung, Ezra Pound, Wilhelm Landig, Julius Evola, and Herman Wirth. While some of his works were translated into English in the 1970s, it was only around the turn of the new millennium with the translation of his Esoteric Hitlerism trilogy that Miguel Serrano became a household reference among esoteric fascists outside the Spanish-speaking world. At his 2009 death, he was already a rock star, with tribute Black Metal and Industrial albums issued in Europe, Russia, United States, and South America, including *In Memory of Miguel Serrano* (2009); *Distant Shores Of Hvetramannaland. A Tribute To Miguel Serrano* (2011), and *El Círculo Hermético: Miguel Serrano Tribute* (2014).[22]

The Esoteric and the Exoteric 14 of Wotan

In 2000, Miguel Serrano was invited to write a foreword to *Temple of Wotan*, a book by Ron McVan of Wotansvolk, a white racist heathen outreach ministry that McVan ran together with imprisoned Silent Brotherhood member David Lane, and his entrepreneurial wife Katja (née Maddox), with headquarters at their Wotanist homestead, complete with a temple hof and ceremonial grounds, in mountainous northern Idaho. Wotansvolk was at the time one of the more important hubs of racist Norse paganism; a heathen milieu often named Odinism or Wotanism to distinguish it from "ethnic" or "folkish" Asatrú, as well as from non- and anti-racist Norse paganism. To Serrano, the Wotansvolk project to restore the racial nation to its former glory led by a reborn elite of Aryan initiates was in line with his grand vision of the cycles of time and what lays ahead. "At the end of time", Serrano wrote in the *Temple of Wotan*, "our Volk Leader will return for the Wild Hunt" and mount a "White Horse, Sleipner, his eight-legged steed. He will be the Last Avatar, also known as Wotan and Vishnu-Kalki. This time, He will come to conquer and to judge".[23]

To Wotansvolk, Wotanism is the spiritual dimension exclusive to the "Aryan race", a key concept vaguely defined. It may mean white people, or the elite of white folks who are in touch with their racial soul; in other contexts, it may refer to the descendants of Nordic migrants to North America (from Thule in mythic time; Europe in historical time); the Nordic race in the Nordic countries, and the Nordic diaspora all over the world; and sometimes to the racially aware elite of the Northern folks only.[24] Even though Wotansvolk is entwined with white nationalist projects on all continents, the Nordic countries included, its construction of the Nordic, and its effort to revive Norse paganism seems primarily addressed to the Nordic diaspora in Vinland, that is, the United States and Canada, one of many

instances indicating that esoteric Nordicism may be of pivotal importance to "Nordic" fascist identity constructions also outside the Nordic countries.

In the Wotansvolk version of cyclical time, the Aryan race originated in an ethereal civilisation somewhere above the north pole, and later materialised on Hyperborea, with its capitol Thule, located in the circumpolar region of today's Northern Canada, Greenland, Iceland, the Nordic countries, and Northern Siberia. There was a Golden Age of wisdom, idealism, honour, and glory, ending in the first Ragnarök. Thus, began a downward spiral of decline through a succession of Ragnarök, down to the inglorious Wolf Age that we now live in. The primary cause of the cataclysmic fall that ended the latest high culture, the pagan age of the heroic Vikings, was spiritual and came with the advent of Jewish Christianity. "If ever there were a birth of tragedy, it was when Aryan man turned his back on the indigenous Gods of his race", McVan writes. "On that day he sacrificed the very roots of his being, ushering in the labyrinth of his own descent".[25] Inspired by Jung, Wotansvolk asserts that the Aryan gods remained dormant through the centuries of Christian dominion, deeply embedded in the Aryan psyche. With the *völkisch* revival of the late 19th century and the subsequent National Socialist Movement, the archetypical forces began to remanifest. Paraphrasing Jung, Wotansvolk likens Wotan to a long quiescent volcano that at any moment may forcibly resume its activity. With overwhelming power, the suppressed Gods of the Blood will return with a vengeance, Wotansvolk says, confidently pointing to the ascendancy of Hitler as an historical precedent that is bound to manifest anew: "Nowhere since Viking times has the direct, singular effect of Wotan consciousness been more evident than in the folkish unity of National Socialist Germany".[26]

In Wotansvolk philosophy, a race is a bio-spiritual-cultural entity, what Evola called a "deep meta-biological force", that does not only exist in the body but also, more importantly, in the "soul and spirit".[27] To survive and evolve, a race, Wotansvolk emphasises, must be animated by its "racial soul", a unique spiritual heritage transmitted by blood, understood in Jungian terms as a race-specific collective unconscious. "A race without its mythos and religion of the blood shifts aimlessly through history", McVan asserts.[28] Wotanism is identified as "the inner voice of the Aryan soul, which links the infinite past with the infinite future". Accordingly, McVan insists, "all Aryans today retain an element of Wotan consciousness", and has the potential to pursue the Faustian task of attaining divinity.[29]

Engraved in each member of the Aryan race are powerful archetypes that may be reached by re-enacting the rituals and ceremonies developed by the ancestors and transmitted from generation to generation by the "song of the blood" through times immemorial. These archetypes are the Norse gods and goddesses, who will exist as long as there are living members of the race, being genetically encoded in the DNA, in a process Stephen McNallen, then *goði* of the Asatrú Folk Assembly, nowadays of the Wotan Network, calls "metagenetics".[30] There is no ontological distinction separating Aryan man

and Aryan gods. They are conceived of as kin, differing in power rather than nature.[31] To the individual white Nordic man, the meeting with these archetypical forces recharges divine energy that he or she may continue to work with, to advance on the spiritual path towards self-metamorphosis into a Nietzschean Superman, a self-created white Nordic Man-God.

Wotansvolk holds daily meditation as the technique by which "unlimited powers are obtained, marvels and miracles are worked, the highest spiritual knowledge is acquired and union with the great gods of our folk is eventually gained".[32] Much like Serrano, McVan envisions Aryan man as a universe with all its worlds, as a microcosmic reflection of Yggdrasil, evolving towards perfection. Along the spine are seven energy centres, "wheels" or "gateways", each associated with a specific rune. The spiritual ascendancy of individual man begins with meditation, using these runic chakras of the Runic Tree of Man as contemplative focuses, working with the force of the Norse goddess (the equivalent of Kundalini, the coiled snake, female energy) at the base of the spine in an upward motion through the Inner Yggdrasil until it unites with the masculine energy and attains divine consciousness. Meditations may also focus on particular runes, preferably of the elder futhark. These are seen as cosmic encodings, originating in Hyperborea, of the inner mysteries of the world. Each rune is a secret, connected to a secret lore, wisdom, and force, and has a form, an idea, a number, and a sound, which makes them useable in multiple contexts, including yoga, divination, gymnastics, meditation, writing, chanting, encoding, and decoding. Their main working is to unlock the gateways to the racial soul, awaken that particular essence it is a bearer of, which lays dormant in the lost, yet present past. "Runes are the mysteries and keys to the mysteries at the same time".[33]

In addition to individual practice, adherents to Wotansvolk philosophy are encouraged to connect with the archetypical gods and goddesses through re-enacting communal pagan ceremonies. "The practice of Wotanism ritual and ceremony of the annual festivals is recognised as the most effective way of impressing on our Aryan folk the wisdom, ethics, and customs of our ancestors. Celebrating our indigenous traditions is as ancient as our race and is essential to our identity, unity, and survival as a people".[34]

Wotansvolk fully accepts the argument of Julius Evola of the two "practical tasks" racism had to accomplish: the passive and active defence of the race. The first task was to shelter the race from external contamination, spiritually, culturally, and physically, by keeping it pure and unmixed. The second, to exalt the inner race, to accomplish its perfection. Much like Ernst Jünger, Evola saw no better way to this end than by the test of fire. "The highest instrument to the inner awakening of race is combat, and war is its highest impression".[35]

To achieve the first, "passive" defence of the race, Wotansvolk teaches white separatism, both in terms of building white pagan communities, or tribal settlements, with their own schools or home-schooling, as steps on the route to establish white homelands or ethnostates; and in terms of keeping

the race holy, that is, set apart, spiritually and culturally, by practicing Wotanism. It established the "14 codes of Aryan ethics",[36] and, to keep the inner essence of the race pure, the "esoteric 14", intended for initiates working with seven series of corresponding inner and outer sevens (planets, races/racial souls, subraces, ethereal vestments, weekdays, runes).[37]

To Evola and Wotansvolk, sheltering the race was necessary, but insufficient. To exalt the race, it had to be put through the test of "total war". To Wotansvolk, as much as to Jünger and Evola, total war should be interpreted quite literary, as a physical war of apocalyptic proportion. To this end, Wotansvolk stresses the instrumentality of its more famous "exoteric 14", or the "Holy 14 Words", coined by David Lane in 1988 to rally the otherwise fragmented world of white fascism around what really matters: racial survival: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children". The Holy 14 Words have become one of the most important identity markers and rallying cries used throughout the globalised white power culture, in literature, art, music, lyrics, messages, memes, manifestos, media, and communications, and on clothing, handicrafts, tags, merchandise, tattoos, posters, arms, as well as recurrently cited motive for political violence.

According to Lane, the Holy 14 Words were channelled to him in a mystic encounter with a community of immortal Aryan sages, the Watchers; a group of spiritual guides from the Hyperborean homeland, who in times of need communicate with especially important Aryan leaders, such as Caesar, Hitler, and David Lane.

Lane was one of the founding members of the legendary Aryan guerrilla Brüders Schweigen, popularly known as the Order, led by Odinist Robert Jay Mathews. In the founding ceremony at Mathew's homestead in Metaline Falls, Washington State, the Original Nine initiates were standing in a circle of candles watched over by a portrait of Hitler, and with a six-week-old female baby placed on a blanket at the centre. Clasping hands as "free Aryan warriors", the initiates swore an oath "upon the green graves of our sires" and "the children in the wombs of our wives" to "do whatever is necessary to deliver our people from the Jew and bring total victory to the Aryan race".[38] In Norse paganism, nine represents potency, completion, and fulfilment. According to Edred Thorsson (Stephen Flowers) of the Rune Guild and Rûna-Raven Press, the ninth rune of the Elder futhark, ᚺ, *Hagal* is "the number of a completeness that leads to a birth of greater power and productivity", used in rune magic in "evolutionary, becoming operations".[39] Hagal is the "guide to evolution", McVan writes, the "unity of fire and ice", and the "mother rune", representing "rebirth" and "renewal".[40] Of course, the unification of fire and ice was in this context intended to bring about cosmic renewal through instigating a total race war.

The oathbound brethren raised a multimillion-dollar war chest through armed car robberies and counterfeit operations, allowing for huge donations to white nationalist projects and the acquisition of military

equipment, arms, cars, motorcycles, safe houses, and land, on which the Order built an Aryan Academy training camp. After a bombing and assassination campaign, the FBI clamped down on the Order. They killed Bob Mathews in a 1984 shoot-out and tracked down the remaining leadership, including David Lane, who received a 190-year sentence. During the manhunt before getting caught, Lane claims he ventured out in a New Mexican desert to meditate for "forty days and forty nights". Having established rapport with the Watchers, they revealed to him the Holy 14 Words only days before his arrest.[41]

Lane originally published the Holy 14 Words in his *White Genocide Manifesto* (1988), distributed from prison as a printed handout. Its second edition, published by 14 Word Press in 1994, coincided with the first internet revolution and spread throughout the worldwide white web.[42] Lane's experience with the Order convinced him that white nationalists had to stop building organisations, as they are far too visible – especially if successful – and easy for the police to monitor, infiltrate, and take down. Instead, the white revolution should adopt the "leaderless resistance" tactics based on small "phantom cells" operating without centralised command, as suggested by Louis Beam, Grand Dragon Emeritus of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.[43] Following Beam, Lane argued for a division of labour between an overt milieu of propaganda outlets and a covert milieu of armed activists. Since the public leaders "will be under scrutiny", they need to "operate within the [legal] parameters" and, protected by the Bill of Rights, issue generalised calls for action, but abstain from giving direct orders. Individuals joining the WOTAN paramilitary "must operate in small, autonomous cells, the smaller the better, even one man alone". Militants should "live like chameleons" – melt into the mainstream community – and without warning unleash acts of "merciless terror", the more irrational the better, to hasten the coming Ragnarök through which the race will be reborn.[44] To install the virtues needed to secure racial survival, Lane says, exoteric Odinism must be a "religion of nature" that celebrates "war, plunder, and sex".[45]

Black Sun Rising

The Holy 14 Words, Wotansvolk, the Order, Bob Mathews, and David Lane are household names in the white radical nationalist milieu in the Nordic countries, but racist paganism and occult fascism have been less of a story in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland, in comparison with their impact on the white racist landscape in the United States. This may reflect the general standing of "religion" in respective region, with Americans being expected, or at least not ashamed to, openly declare their religiosity, while public declarations of religiousness have been less normal, and even considered awkward or inappropriate, in mainstream Nordic settings. Radical nationalists in the Nordic countries may see their countries as Christian and defend them against non-Christian, especially Muslim, migration, and

some parties participate in Church elections, but "religion", spirituality, mysticism, and occultism have rarely been that trendy among fascist activists in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland, in the same way that it has in the United States.

The situation is similar when it comes to Vikings, Norse mythology, handicraft, and folklore. Everybody, generally speaking, in the Nordic countries loves Vikings, and fascists do too. However, very few people in the Nordic countries take their fascination for Norse culture further and join some of the national federations that seek or sought to revive pre-Christian Norse traditions, such as *Asatrofællesskabet*, *Asatrofællesskabet Yggdrasil*, and *Forn Siðr*, *Asa- og Vanetrosamfundet* in Denmark; *Bifrost and Asatrufellsskapet Forn Sed* in Norway; *Forn Sed*, *Asatrosamfundet*, and *Norröna samfundet* (*Nordiska Ringen*) in Sweden, or any of the homegrown *blotlag* (small tribal faith communities) that now and then thrive here and there.[46]

The major Norse pagan federations in the Nordic countries tend to be explicitly a-racist or anti-racist in outlook and practice. Following the general rise of white radical nationalism in mainstream Nordic politics and society, this began to change during the past few decades, with a more visible presence of racist heathen societies and ethnic *Asatrú* groups open to people of white, Nordic and/or European descent only. Some of these are imports, such as (now defunct) Wotansvolk Sweden, and the Asatru Folk Assembly (AFA) Scandinavia, which claims chapters in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, led by European Folk Builder Anders Nilsson from Sweden.[47] Others are homegrown products, such as the Norwegian *Vigrid*, an Odinist group founded by Tore W. Tvedt in 1999, which aims to establish an independent Nordic nation based on Nordic religion, traditions, and values.[48]

Exports are rarer but do exist. One of Sweden's rare contributions to the esoteric scene globally is the initiatory order Dragon Rouge, founded by Thomas Karlsson in 1989. While its "gothic" kabbalah, Odinic "runosophy", and Norse pagan themes certainly contributed to attract its share of individual "Satanic" and left/hand path national socialists, Dragon Rouge as an order hardly qualifies as fascist. However, the major contribution to the world of occult fascism and racist paganism from the Nordic countries is not an organisation, but a scene of cultural production: "extreme" metal.

"Extreme Metal" names a scene that constantly seeks to transgress the extreme to be the radical extreme in waves of transgression, musically, discursively, aesthetically, thematically, affectively. When the heavy metal bands (for example *Black Sabbath*, *Judas Priest*) of the late 1960s/1970s went from icons of rebels to become the music of daddies and suburban garden barbeques, the 1980s saw the first wave of "black" or "trash" metal with bands such as *Bathory* (Sweden), *Celtic Frost* (Switzerland), *Mercyful Fate* (Denmark), *Sarcófago* (Brazil), and *Venom* (England) – whose 1982 album *Black Metal* temporarily gave the scene a name. Visually and lyrically, the flirt with the Dark that began already with heavy metal now was accentuated

by giving Satan the centre stage. When hails to the devil became norm, a second wave of transgressive styles took force in the Nordic countries in the late 1980s and conquered the extreme metal scene in the 1990s, with band such as *Darkthrone*, *Mayhem*, *Burzum*, *Gorgoroth*, and *Satyricon* (Norway) and *Marduk*, *Abruptum*, *Nifelheim*, and *Dissection* (Sweden). The distorted electric guitars, blast beat drums, and growling vocals were joined by ambient, folk, medieval, melodic, organ, and acoustic elements as black and trash became death, gore, doom, Viking, Norse, Pagan, and national socialist Black Metal (NSBM). Predominantly white and often racist, extreme metal was similar to the contemporary Punk scene (also predominantly white, but often anarchist and antiracist) in its rejection of the commercial music industry and mainstream culture and vowed to stay "true" forever: metal and punk "never dies". Extreme metal bands launched their own independent record labels, studios, and fanzines, and metalheads developed their own way of life, with their own aesthetics, art, and dress code: black leather clothes, corpse paint, and metal spikes; black tees with satanic, Norse, fascist, occult, and band brand motives; and heavy black boots.[49]

Aesthetically and lyrically, extreme metal revolved around violence, aggression, death, blood, gore, and war and was drawn to the dark, satanic, sinister, and evil. Heavily influenced by Tolkien, extreme metal hailed Sauron and the forces of Mordor. The first persona of Varg Vikernes was Count Grishnackh, named after the Orc captain of Mordor. Vikernes' band, *Burzum*, means "darkness" in Black Speech, the language of Mordor, and the Swedish death metal band *Amon Amarth* takes its name from the Temple of Doom volcano in Tolkien's Middle Earth. Extreme metal Satanism typically distances itself from ego-centric libertine forms of modern Satanism, such as Anton Szandor LaVey's Church of Satan, who preached indulgence in the seven deadly sins because it leads to physical, mental, and emotional gratification.[50] If LaVey turned "evil" around to "live", extreme Nordic metal turned it back. Satanism was not about fun and pleasure, but depression, pain, and misery. Similarly, when extreme metal turned to the Vikings, and Nordic paganism, it saw plunder, rape, ice, and darkness, Loki, the Fenris wolf and trolls. Leather-clad metal band members ventured deep into the dark forests in the Nordic winter to pose with swords and axes in the snow and took themselves seriously. Unsurprisingly then, when extreme Nordic metal found fascism, it embraced the Nazi Occult and the image of Hitler as the epitome of evil.

In post-war western popular culture, German National Socialism is recurrently treated as an irrational cult rather than a political movement, as has been noted by Monica Black and Eric Kurlander, Eva Klingsepp and others.[51] Seminal works of fantastic realism embroidered on the existence of secret societies and esoteric elements found in national socialist history, later explored by scholars such as Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke and discussed by Forsell in this volume,[52] to create an image of the Third Reich as an effort to build an Evil Empire on black magic, alchemy, astrology,

and occult sciences. In *Le Matin des magiciens* (1960), Lois Pauwels and Jacques Berger claim that Hitler was connected to powerful secret societies and sought mystic encounters with "unknown supermen" from Vril crypts in Tibetan monasteries, evoked in nocturnal pagan and satanic rites, to tap into the Vril, the enormous energy that is the source of man's potential divinity.[53] In *The Order of the Death's Head* (1967), Heinrich Höhne depicts the SS as an order of criminals led by a ring of the 12 black knights of Himmler who convened at the Valhalla dining hall of the castle Wewelsburg, set up as a dark reflection of King Arthur's roundtable, to hold occult seances. On the floor was a mosaic, later identified as a Black Sun wheel with 12 sig runes radiating from its centre, allegedly designed by Karl Maria Wiligut, "Himmler's Rasputin". The Black Sun symbolises Agartha, the hidden city of immortal Aryan sages, and the resurrection of the Aryan super race. Under its insignia, the Black Knights will rule the Dark Millenarian Reich from Wewelsburg, the Occult Vatican.[54] In *The Spear of Destiny* (1972), Trevor Ravenscroft added Hitler's alleged obsession with the Lance of Longinus, the spear said to have pierced the side of Jesus on the cross. In occult tradition, the Spear of Destiny is identified as the Grail or is linked to the Holy Grail by claiming that the Grail is Jesus' cup from the Last Supper, used by Joseph of Arimathea to collect the blood of Christ from the wound of the spear. As a container of the Saviour's blood, the Grail conveys immortality and immense powers to its owner. Ravenscroft tells the story of the guardians of the Spear of Destiny, who used it for good or evil – including 47 emperors and warlords (for example Constantine, Justinian, Karl Martel, Charlemagne, Barbarossa), and the Order of the Teutonic Knights – and claims that Hitler searched for, and eventually gained, possession of the lance, with the aim of inverting its Force to conquer the world.[55]

Thus, commenced the Nazi Occult. A flood of books, videogames, and films, including the epic Indiana Jones' *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) and *The Last Crusade* (1989), featured evil Nazis in liaison with devilish forces, tapping into occult mysteries or searching for lost worlds and sacred relics. In the next twist, the Nazi Occult attracted modern Satanists, left-hand path travellers, and extreme metal, industrial, and neofolk bands. The "satanic" or "post-satanic" initiatory esoteric order Temple of Set was, for example, drawn to the Nazi Occult. The Temple's California-based High-Priest Michael Aquino travelled to Wewelsburg to do a black magic "working" in the Hall of the Death [*Totenstätte*] where Himmler supposedly had performed magic rituals,[56] and the castle has since drawn its share of touring *occultnics*. The "Wewelsburg Effect" impacted on neofolk bands, notably *Death in June*, named after the Night of the Long Knifes, as shown by Oded Heilbronner, and was irresistible to NSBM, with bands such as the *Order of the Death's Head*, *Kristallnacht*, *Birkenau*, *War88*, *Abyssic Hate*, and scores of extreme metal acts sporting *Black Sun*, *Wewelsburg*, or *SS* in their band names or album titles.

Construed as a mythic abode of racial purity, the North reverberates prominently in extreme metal culture. Celebrated Nordic extreme metal bands articulating Norse themes include *Ásmegin*, *Burzum*, *Drottnar*, *Einherjer*, *Enslaved*, *Myrkgrav* (Norway), *Ensiferum*, *Goatmoon*, *Moonsorrow* and *Turisas* (Finland), *Svartsot* and *Vanir* (Denmark), and *In Battle*, *Månegarm*, *Thyrfing*, *Unleashed*, and *Vintersorg* (Sweden).

The extreme metal scene "demonstrates a strong sense of Nordic identity", in its lyrics, as shown by Nikolas Sellheim.[57] According to extreme metal lyrics, Northern people are aggressive, strong, and violent, and they do not fear death. Valhalla, the Spear of Odin, and the Ride of the Dead are popular themes, along with trolls, norns, Ragnarök, Æesir, and Vanir. Nature is wild, forests are deep, darkness, ice, thunderstorms, and violent seas reign. In metal minds, the North as the land of free, honourable and upright pagan men and women was destroyed by alien Christianity. For that, Christians shall suffer. "The revenge they sought/Was taken in blood", Amon Amarth sings in *The Victorious March* about five brave pagan men who proudly return after slaying all Christian men somewhere and feeding their flesh to the wolves. "All sorrow is left/For the women to bare/The children cries/They'll live in fear/No man was spared/No house or farm remains/No Christian woman unraped/Their church consumed by flames/By flames/Their church consumed by flames".[58] In *The Rage of Northmen*, the Swedish extreme metal band *In Battle* lyricises how the heathen warriors "As wolves close in on the prey/Armed and furious, hundreds in number/Mastering the art of war". Churches and cathedrals are set aflame while the "Christians cowardly kneel before the cross". None is spared the wrath of the Northmen. "Swords plunge into the flesh/Splashing blood and breaking bone", another victory at hand.[59]

While metal rage against Christianity often is projected to the past, the quest to cleanse the North of alien invaders today is primarily directed against Jews and Muslims. In *Pure Blood*, the Finnish *Goatmoon* seeks the "bloody war of Aryan purity" and feels how the "honor grows within me" as "I cut the throats of race betrayers". *Goatmoon* invokes the coming race war, "I am the bringer of total Holocaust/Soon this world will be pure".[60] In "Purify Sweden", *Lord Belial* growled, "All fucking mosques must burn/Purify Sweden!/Molest all Islamic believers".[61] While the band directs it rage against all religions, it is the mosques that shall burn, as noted by Per Faxneld.[62] In a similar vein, the Finnish NSBM band *Clandestine Blaze* by Mikko Aspa picks up the Islamophobic stealth jihad trope in his *Fist of the Northern Destroyer*: "Islamic plague raising/Spreading its dirty seed/Violent Intolerance as reward/For their holy secret war", but also vows to bring down the "Culture of Zion" that was "never meant to be here".[63]

In the 1990s, extreme Nordic metal became world news as *Burzum's* Varg Vikernes and others turned their desire to purify the Nordic lands into murders and church burnings, in a story detailed by Michael Moynihan and Didrik Søderlind in *Lords of Chaos* (1998), that also became a film by the

same title (2018).[64] In 1994, Vikernes was sentenced to 21 years in prison for the murder of Euronymous (Øystein Aarseth), guitarist in *Mayhem*, and owner of the legendary metal shop *Helvete* (Hell) in Oslo and the *Deathlike Silence* record label, and for several cases of church burnings. By then, the metal rage against the Christian "occupation" of the native white pagan North had turned against churches and graveyards. In 1992, the Fantoft Stave Church, built around 1150, was set aflame; an arson for which Vikernes was suspected but acquitted. "That was the 6 June, and everybody linked it to Satanism", he told Moynihan in an interview. "What everyone overlooked was that on 6 June, year 793, in Lindisfarne in Britain was the site of the first known Viking raid in history, with Vikings from Hordaland, which is my county".[65] Christians had desecrated holy heathen grounds all over Norway, Vikernes said, pointing at Fantoft being built on top of a heathen *hörg* (ceremonial site). The Norse avengers built a fire of dried grass and branches as a "psychological picture – an almost dead fire, a symbol of our heathen consciousness" that would be "light up and reach toward the sky again, as a growing force. That was the point, and it worked".[66]

Vikernes returned to the subject of church burnings in his *Vargmål*, his prison writings. In *Vargsmål*, church burnings are linked to "the heathen revival". It will surely have a polarising effect, with angry Norwegians rushing to defend the ancient churches. But for each sword a Christian pick up, there will be ten heathens arming themselves to resurrect their lost pristine culture. "It begins with a single attack on the anti-culture, as grave desecration, and church burnings, but it is only a beginning. Once again will Odin be able to be proud of his sons and daughters, once again will Thor fight side by side with the Norwegian Einherjars […], we shall in all truth become a folk again!"[67]

Upon his release in 2009, Vikernes moved to a small farm in Corrèze, France, with his wife Marie Cachet and changed his legal name to Louis Cachet, still using Varg Vikernes in daily life, and as musician, writer, and heathen ideologue. In 2013, the couple was charged, but acquitted, on terrorism charges after a raid when the police found arms at their country home. The following year, he was sentenced to six months' probation for inciting racial hatred against Jews and Muslims on his YouTube channel *Thuleân Perspective* that had hundreds of thousand subscribers before it was banned as part of YouTube's new policy of prohibiting hate speech and productions that "promote or glorify Nazi ideology".[68] Marie Cachet also runs YouTube channels, including *Perganism*, which portray heathen home-building and organic farming; and the *Bear Cult* and the *Fore-Bears*, two of several projects she runs with her husband. Vikernes continues to produce music, books, and merch, sold by himself and a heathen network of sympathisers, predominantly found in Poland, Russia, and the United States; with albums *Belus* (2010), *Fallen* (2011) and *Umskiptar* (2012), *Sôl austan*, *Mâni vestan* (2013), *The Ways of Yore* (2014), *XIII* (box 2018), *In the Arms of Darkness* (boxed 2019), and the ambient *Thuleân Mysteries* (2020).

When in prison, Vikernes began elaborating on his heathen worldview in books (for example *Vargsmål*, 1994; *Germansk mytologi og Verdenskaanskuelse*, 2000; *Irminsûl*, 2002) and music distributed to followers through his Norwegian *Heathen Front*, which quickly became *The Allgermanische Heidnische Front* (AHF) with hubs in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, England, the United States, Canada, Russia, Poland Flanders, and Germany. Following his release, Vikernes wrote *Sorcery and Religion in Ancient Scandinavia* (2012); and co-authored *Paganism Explained I–V* (2017–2019) with Marie Cachet.

Under the *Heathen Front* label, Vikernes developed a heathen philosophy he named *Odalism*; a concept derived from Odal, a judicial 10th century term for land owned since generations, that had the desired connotation of elitism, blood and soil, and Norse paganism. "Odalism signify an ambition to recreate the primordial Nordic values", *Heathen Front* wrote, "its way of life, worldview and morals", and reforge the link between Northern blood, nature, and spirituality by reviving pre-Christian pagan ceremonies and rituals.[69] Referring to McNallen's theory of "metagenetics", the *Heathen Front* insists that spirituality, culture, and ethnicity are transmitted by blood. Nordic spirituality is exclusively engraved in the DNA of pure Nordic people, who is mystically connected to the Nordic soil. Adopting an "ethnopluralist" perspective, Odalism claims that the different peoples (ethnicities/cultures/races/folks/nations) of the world are native to specific territories, as their natural habitat, which they are obliged to defend against invading races and corporate exploitation.[70] When referring to the "native" people of the North, the Heathen Front refers to white Nordic people, not to the Saami, the Kvens, or people with (non-Germanic) migrant background, no matter for how many generations their families have been living in the Nordic countries. Following the Armanist-Wotanist tradition developed by Guido von List in the vast forests of the Austrian parts of the Habsburg Empire, the *Heathen Front* set out in the Nordic woods as extreme metal lay archaeologists and folklorists, equipped with maps, compasses, measuring tapes, cameras, binoculars, and notebooks, mapping sites of ancient hofs, ceremonial grounds, and burial places.[71] In time, when Vikernes had settled in France, and the Heathen Front turned towards radical traditionalism, the AHF was eclipsed by other efforts to revive or preserve old Nordic countries, such as *KulturOrgan Skadinaujo*, and *Gimle*.

Populism, Elitism, and the People

Roger Griffin defines fascism as a "palingenetic form of populist ultranationalism".[72] Hence, to Griffin, populism is at the core of fascism. Does that mean that varieties of "ultra" or "radical" nationalism that are not populist are not fascist? What, then, about the esoteric milieus and occult pagan currents we have met in this chapter? Should a revolutionary radical nationalist ideologue, creed, milieu, or initiatory secret society that is explicitly elitist

and abhors populism as plebeian, be considered something other than fascist, or should we, on an empirical basis, modify the "fascist minimum" by deleting "populism" from its definition? What, in such a case, happens to "the People" in fascism?

While Griffin sees populism as inherent to fascism, their relation is not straightforward and simple, as fascism, Griffin observes, also is elitist. Fascism appeals to "the People" but inserts itself as the only legitimate body that can realise "the will" of the people by imposing fascism. Fascism seeks a revolution in the name of the people but cannot leave the revolution to the people. Griffin finds fascism similar to Leninism in respect of the role of the illuminated few insisting that the revolution must be led by themselves as a self-appointed avant-garde that is by an elite. Unlike Leninism, Griffin points out, "fascism is not elitist only in tactics for seizing power" but in its "basic conception of society". Whereas Leninism foresees a coming classless communitarian society in which the elite has served its role and merged with the people, fascism is anti-egalitarian and projects a future "organic" society based on hierarchy, order, and harmonious class-cooperation, in which the general will of the people is expressed by the elite whose role as heads of perfect society is perpetuated into eternity. While populist in the sense that fascism remains dependent on the people as referent and as basis of its political legitimacy, fascism in power will, initially and indefinitely, be led by an elite in the name of an organic national greatness *yet to be realised*, and for which techniques of mass control, re-education, and mass propaganda will be employed. "A paradox thus lies at the heart of fascist ultranationalism", Griffin concludes. "It is populist in intent and rhetoric, yet elitist in practice".[73]

After 1945, this paradox became even more complicated as fascism lost its mass appeal. While fascism historians Stanley Payne and Robert O. Paxley do not use the concept of populism, both see "the masses" as central to fascist ambition. Payne's typological description of fascism includes "mass mobilisation" and the formation of a "mass party militia" as key fascist goals, and Paxton sees the idea of the "mass-based party" as central to the definition of fascism.[74] Hitler and Mussolini mobilised the passions of the masses and made them feel part of something greater than themselves: a once glorious nation now victimised by corrupting and exploiting forces of darkness. The increasing powers of the enemy, fascist leaders insisted, had led to an extraordinary crisis that ultimately threatened the very existence of the people. To meet the existential threat, the masses had to invest extraordinary authority in the fascist elite as their organic leaders who embody their will to life, power, and prosperity. The fascist elite will then unleash extraordinary measures, including exclusionary violence and total war, to crush the enemy, and restore to the people all the glory and benefits it is entitled to.

In pre-1945 fascism, the people and its leaders publicly acknowledged – even celebrated – their belief in the greatness and infallibility of each other.

The devastating defeat of 1945 broke that bond. The mutual trust and admiration between the people and the fascist leaders turned into mutual disbelief and wholescale rejection. Fascism was suddenly totally discredited in the eyes of the people, who sought to reinvent itself as democratic subjects by condemning fascism, posing at its victims, and denying culpability, and even knowledge, of the exclusionary violence fascism had used in the name of the people to cleanse the nation from corrupting elements over its years in power. Similarly, the people fell in the eyes of the fascist leadership and fell hard. Both Hitler and Mussolini sought to save fascism by condemning the people. To Hitler, Social Darwinism and the doctrine of racial superiority could not be falsified. Should Germany be defeated it proved that the Aryan race/German nation was not superior, and not worthy of his ideas. "If the German people was to be conquered in the struggle", Hitler told at a meeting with party officials in August 1944, "then it had been too weak to face the test of history and was fit only for destruction".[75] Similarly, the Duce rejected the people he had invested in. "It isn't Fascism that has ruined Italians, it's Italians who have ruined Fascism", Mussolini exclaimed. "It's this great mass of contaminated and sick slaves who go from lethargy to desperation who have failed".[76]

Post-1945 fascism sought to get back on its feet after having received the "knockout-blow" from the Allied forces, by regrouping, reorganising, and reformulating fascism. An important segment worked hard to revise, refashion, and rebrand fascism, in order to give it "another name, another face", and took it in various directions, some of which became quite successful.[77] Others stuck to fascism by name and appearance and developed various strategies to deny its "apparent loss", some of which we have met in this chapter.

Populism and fascism that once flowed like a mighty river across the political landscape of radical nationalism began to separate into two and more separate streams, like a river bifurcation, a river fork. Populism and rebranded fascism continued flowing downhill wherever it found the ground prepared and few blockages, adopting anti-immigrant rhetoric, majoritarian fears, and new people to stigmatise (for example Muslims) along the way. Further downstream, new radical nationalist parliamentarian parties and ideologues were formed, which, like the apostle Peter, denied their past, and their former acquaintances, and angrily rejected being labelled fascism as "brown-smearing". Attracting more tributaries, streams, creeks, and rivers, it became what is named the radical right, right-wing populist nationalism, and the like, which has made a major breakthrough as a political force also outside fascism's historic heartland: in Poland, Hungary, Turkey, India, Burma, Brazil, and the United States. While its rhetoric, discourse, and imagery differ according to context, this variety is typically nativist, monoculturalist, authoritarian, and illiberal. Although it recurrently refers to itself as democratic, and use democratic means in its bid for power, it has meant bad news for minority rights, academic freedom, and the free press, wherever it made an impact on national politics.

Among the post-1945 fascist stalwarts who refuse to adopt the Peter tactics, the take on populism and "the People" is divided. One current seems enamoured in the pre-1945 imagery of uniformed masses marching under flying banners – the "fascist spectacle" – and daydreams of its reoccurrence under their leadership and colours. Thus, the myriad of fascist parties designing their particular uniforms, banners, and symbols used at meetings and public performances. With rare exceptions, such as the Greek Golden Dawn, these parties have failed to attract any resemblance of mass following; with anti-fascist protesters frequently outnumbering the marching storm troopers. In fact, their failure to show is of a magnitude that makes the Nordic Resistance Movement appear successful, despite the fact that it rarely attracts more than a thousand uniformed foot soldiers when it summons its cadres from the Nordic countries to get together for a march.

Another fascist current finds such efforts embarrassing. Fascists seeking to rally the "white masses" "will not work, never has worked, and almost always results in merely revealing our weaknesses and making us look like idiots", said James Mason, then head of the National Socialist Liberation Front in the United States.[78] Mason was one of the early architects of the decentralised, leaderless, armed struggle, in which the fascist elite would educate people and issue generalised call to arms, but give no orders, and leave the bloodshed to individual revolutionaries "out there" who would melt into the general population, never reveal their fascist convictions, and strike hard with lethal force at soft targets, the more chocking and irrational the violence, the better. This fascist current gave birth to the white fascist lone wolf who kills randomly selected nonwhites or white race traitors at supermarkets, summer camps, schools, churches, mosques, synagogues, or target individual Black, Muslim, Jewish, and Roma people, and white race mixers, in sniper assassin campaigns. The basic aim is to hasten the approaching Ragnarök, the apocalyptic race war, by creating tensions and fears that will increase the contradictions inherent to the system; a fascist version of a revolutionary theory known as "accelerationism".[79]

According to this current (the armed leaderless resistance) covertly running through the radical nationalist landscape, "the People", that is, the overwhelming majority of "native" or "indigenous" white Nordic folks, will die along with the alien races in the coming race war. To the racist serial killer Peter Mangs, the most lethal of the white fascist lone wolves known to have operated in Sweden, the white masses basically are a fallen, irredeemable, despicable people. They will all die in the coming cleansing, save a small elite of extraordinary strong and intelligent individuals who will prove their worth by surviving the approaching apocalypse. Selected by Nature, the surviving elite will be the progenitors of the Aryan Super race when the reborn Nordic nation will arise like the bird Phoenix out of the ashes of the all-consuming total war.[80]

On their side, esoteric fascists see themselves as an elite located well above the heard of modern democratic sheep. As fascists, they still refer to

"the People" in positive terms, but mainly in times past and coming: in tales of its former greatness and heroism during the golden age of the legendary past, and in visions of its future re-ascendency as a divine community in the post-cataclysmic era of the renewed golden age. According to the cyclical conception of time in esoteric fascism, the real existing white masses of today are a fallen people, reflecting the murky debasement of our time, the Kali Yuga of Miguel Serrano and Savitri Devi, the Wolf Age of Wotansvolk and Vikernes. Those who remain reflections of their lower selves will be exterminated along with the inferior races when Hitler returns as Kalki or Wotan to clear the filth of the present era. The worthy few who rise to the occasion and rekindle their higher warrior selves will see the dawn of the Golden Age, if nothing else as reincarnated Aryan heroes, with the Green Rays of the Black Sun rising over their retrotopian paradise of Hyperborea.

Bringing together the separated streams of post-1945 radical nationalism, the tension between populism and elitism run through their respective, more or less explicitly fascist projects, whether reformed, fossilised, or esoteric. Post-1945 fascism is populist in the sense of being anti-establishment, and decries the current political, economic, and intellectual elites as part of the problem, and as enemies of "the People". While anti-elitist and pro-people, fascism is by principle anti-egalitarian, which they see as the order of nature. The cadres and leaders of fascism typically consider themselves to be the elite and their message exclusive to the Aryan, Nordic elite. Accordingly, in fascist thought, there are two elites, the corrupt and the authentic: the establishment elite and the fascist elite. Similarly, and correspondingly, the People figures in dual form: the corrupt and the authentic; the soiled people produced by the establishment elites, and the pure people moulded into perfection by the fascist elite. The fascist elites we have met in this chapter have nothing but contempt for the current people. They do everything wrong: vote for the wrong parties, let migrants cross the borders, mix with people of alien blood, are influenced by alien cultures, have materialistic desires, listen to the wrong music, eat junk food, don't keep their bodies in shape, arrange Pride parades, and believe that races do not exist, all cultures are equal, feminism is fine, egalitarianism is nice, and fascism is evil. The condemnation of the people found its most graphic expression with Varg Vikernes and his extreme metal compatriots who desecrated the graves of ordinary Norwegian folks. "The people who lie in the graves are the ones that built this society which we are against", Vikernes explained. "We show them the respect that they deserve".[81]

Contemporary Nordic fascism seeks to replace the establishment elite with themselves, that is, the authentic elite, who are destined to rule the coming perfected society. Equally dissatisfied with the people of the modern democracies in the Nordic countries, fascism aims at cleansing the people of aliens and corrupted elements and sealing the territorial borders of the Nordic countries from non-white intruders, in order to pave the way for systemic change, with the fascist elite as the organic leaders of a purified and authentic people.

In the final analysis, this may shed new light on the recurrent reference to the Great Replacement theory in contemporary fascism. As is well known, fascists repeatedly claim that the indigenous white Nordic people currently are being replaced by hordes of Muslim and African invaders in accordance with a clandestine plan of a secret cabal – be it the Jews, the Illuminati, extraterrestrial lizards, the globalist, the demiurge – that control the economy, media, parliaments and universities in the Nordic countries. Yet, it is the fascists who actually aim to replace the (impure, heterogenous, worthless) people of the North with another (pure, monogenous, valuable) people of their likening. Their fear of being the objects of a secret cabal planning to replace them with a new people may accordingly be animated by the fact that this is exactly what they themselves plan to do.

Notes

1 Serrano served as Chile's ambassador to India 1953–1962; Yugoslavia 1962–1964; and Austria 1964–1970.
2 Black Sun Invictus, "Esoteric Hitlerist".
3 Griffin, *Nature of Fascism*; Griffin, *Fascism*; Gardell, *Lone Wolf*, 8.
4 By staying close to the term's lexical definitions, and etymological roots, I use the concepts occult and esoteric more in line with how they are used in the empirical material than by scholars of esotericism. For a critical discussion of their use within academia, see Asprem, "Esotericism"; Bergunder, "What is Esotericism?"; Hanegraaff, "Esotericism Theorized"; Asprem and Strube, "Esotericism's Expanding Horizon".
5 Forsell, "Hidden Knowledge and Mythical Origins."
6 Serrano quoted in Black Sun Invictus, "Esoteric Hitlerist."
7 Serrano, *Adolf Hitler.*
8 Lowell, "Foreword."
9 Goodrick-Clarke, *Hitler's Priestess.*
10 The Hindutva flag was adorned with the right-facing *swastika* (卐) symbolising the sun, prosperity, and good fortune, which was appropriated by Hitler, but they also used the left-facing *sauwastika* (卍) that became adopted by esoteric fascists, symbolising the night and the tantric aspects of Kalki, the Destroyer.
11 Rao, *Foundations of Tilak's Nationalism*; Seth, "Critique of renunciation."
12 Arktos is a world-leading publisher of fascist literature, including works of esoteric fascism. Led by Daniel Friberg as its CEO, Arktos was based in Mumbai, India, 2011–2014, and has counted Aryan Hindu mystics and Iranian radical traditionalists in its team.
13 Devi, *The Lightening and the Sun.*
14 Ibid., 37–57.
15 Ibid., 219.
16 Ibid., 267. Hans Grimm was an acclaimed German writer whose 1926 novel *Volk ohne Raum* became a bestseller, its title was used in NSDAP rhetoric to stress the need for racial *Lebensraum*.
17 Koehl, "Resurrection;" Koehl, "Adolf Hitler: Prophet;" Koehl, "Building a Spiritual Base."
18 Koehl, "Resurrection."
19 Serrano, *La serpiente del Paraíso.*
20 Serrano, *Cordon Dorado.*

21 Serrano, *La Antártica*.
22 *In Memory*, 2009; *Distant Shores*, 2011; *El Círculo Hermético*, 2014.
23 Serrano, "Wotan – Lord of Hosts."
24 Gardell, *Gods of the Blood*.
25 McVan, *Religion*.
26 W.O.T.A.N., "Will of the Aryan Nation."
27 Evola, "Race and War."
28 McVan, *Death*.
29 McVan, *Creed of Iron*.
30 McNallen, "Metagenetics;" McNallen, ed., *An Odinist Anthology;* McNallen, Interview, 1996.
31 McVan, Interview, 1996; Lane, Interview, 1996; McVan, *Temple of Wotan*.
32 McVan, *Creed of Iron*, 108.
33 Thorsson, *Rune Might*.
34 McVan, *Creed of Iron*, 142; McVan, *Temple of Wotan*.
35 Evola, "Race and War."
36 McVan, *Creed of Iron*.
37 This seems borrowed from Theosophy, although it is not acknowledged as such. McVan, *Temple of Wotan*.
38 Kemp, Interview, 1997; Gardell, *Gods of the Blood*; Flynn and Garhardt, *Silent Brotherhood*, 98.
39 Thorsson, *Futhark*.
40 McVan, *Temple of Wotan*.
41 Lane, Interview, 1996.
42 Lane, *White Genocide Manifesto*.
43 Beam, "Leaderless Resistance;" Gardell, *Lone Wolf*.
44 Lane, *White Genocide Manifesto*; Lane, *Revolution*; Lane, Interview, 1996.
45 Lane, Interview, 1996.
46 Weber Pedersen, "Paganism in Denmark;" Hjelm, "Paganism in Finland;" Uldal and Winje, "Paganism in Norway;" Gregorius, "Paganism in Sweden;" Asprem, "Heathens Up North."
47 For AFA Scandinavia, see https://www.afaskandinavien.com/ and https://runestone.org/.
48 See Vigrid's homepage, https://www.vigrid.net/.
49 Radovanović, "Ideologies and Discourses;" Granholm, "Sons of Northern Darkness."
50 LaVey, *Satanic Bible*; Faxneld and Petersen, *Devil's Party*.
51 Black and Kurlander, *Revisiting the "Nazi Occult;"* Klingsepp, *Nazityskland i populärkulturen*.
52 Forsell, "Hidden Knowledge and Mythical Origins."
53 Pauels and Berger, *Morning of the Magians*, 190–199; Forsell, "Hidden Knowledge and Mythical Origins;" Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*.
54 Höhne, *Order of the Death's Head;* Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*; Wiligut, *Secret King*; Gardell, *Gods of the Blood*.
55 Ravenscroft, *Spear of Destiny*.
56 Heilbronner, "The Wewelsburg Effect;" Dyrendal, Lewis and Petersen, Invention of Satanism; Granholm, "Left-Hand Path and Post-Satanism;" Gardell, Gods of the Blood; Aquino, "The Wewelsburg Working."
57 Sellheim, "Rage of Northmen," 339–348.
58 Amon Amarth, "The Victorious March," 1998. Lyrics written as in original.
59 In Battle, "Rage of Northmen," 1999.
60 Goatmoon, "Pure Blood," 2004.
61 Lord Belial, "Purify Sweden," 2003.
62 Faxneld, "Moskébränder."

63 Clandestine Blaze, "Fist of Northern Destroyer."
64 Moynihan and Søderkind, *Lords of Chaos*.
65 Varg Vikernes, quoted in Moynihan and Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos,* 88–89. In an email exchange with the author on 20 August 2001, Moynihan points out that Vikernes' claim is incorrect, citing that the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle dates the raid to 8 June.
66 Varg Vikernes, quoted in Moynihan and Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos*, 88–89, 156.
67 Vikernes, *Vargsmål*. "*Einherjar*" (sing. *einheri*) in old Norse refers to honourable warriors slayed in battle and literally means "those who fight alone". The plural "s" in Vikernes' text is a typo that appears in the original (and is most likely inspired by plural endings in English).
68 The YouTube Team, "Ongoing work."
69 "Odalism," see http://web.archive.org/web/20051014093558/http://www.hedniskfront.se/; "Odalism – om religiositet," see http://web.archive.org/web/20051014093558/http://www.hedniskfront.se/; "Odalism – den nordiska tanken," see http://web.archive.org/web/20051014093558/http://www.hedniskfront.se/.
70 "Odalism – ett grönt perspektiv," http://web.archive.org/web/20051014093558/http://www.hedniskfront.se/.
71 "Projekt Odal," see http://web.archive.org/web/20051014093558/http://www.hedniskfront.se/.
Vikernes, "Vi behöver," see http://web.archive.org/web/20051014093558/http://www.hedniskfront.se/; Chapman & Lövbrand, "Tillvägagångssätt;" Goodrick-Clarke, *Occult Roots*, 66–68.
72 Griffin, *Nature of Fascism*, 26.
73 Ibid., 41, 36–41.
74 Payne, *History of Fascism*; Paxton*, Anatomy of Fascism.*
75 Trevor-Roper, *Last Days of Hitler.*
76 Eatwell, "Populism and Fascism."
77 Jackson and Feldman, *Doublespeak*.
78 Mason, "Strike Hard."
79 Gardell, *Lone Wolf.*
80 Gardell, *Raskrigaren;* Gardell, "Urban Terror," 793–811.
81 Vikernes, interviewed in Moynihan and Søderkind, *Lords of Chaos.*

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7 Window to Europe

Finland and Nordic Fascist Networks during the Cold War

Tommi Kotonen

This chapter outlines the evolution of the Finnish fascist scene and the Finnish-Nordic contacts from the 1940s until the 1990s and studies their importance for the Finnish activists. The key question here is how Finnish fascism developed in tandem with the Nordic and wider European and transnational movements, reflecting tactics and strategies adopted abroad, as well as gradually developing new ideological positions. Despite largely focusing on anti-communism, the Finns were not immune to such ideas as Holocaust denial or Aryanism, which helped them to create links to the international fascist scene.

In some previous studies, Finland has been analysed as an exception to the rise of radical nationalism until the late 1990s, emphasising especially the missing transnational aspect.[1] Although the opportunities for open political activism were arguably more limited in Finland than elsewhere, and despite differing historical experiences and traditions, the survival strategies however bear many similarities with their ideological counterparts in other Nordic countries and in Europe. In order to understand how this came about, the analysis must move beyond the national gaze. The evolution of Finnish fascism and radical nationalism, with its changes and continuities, becomes more discernible when seen in transnational context.

The chapter is based on a qualitative analysis of archival data collected especially from the files of the Finnish Security Police and from the archives of the Swedish and Finnish fascists. The focus of the chapter is on three phases: initial attempts to revive fascist ideas in Finland in the 1950s by the Swedish-speaking Finns, post-Second World War generation projects during the 1960s, and fascist groups formed during the 1970s. When exploring the revival of fascism in Finland during the Cold War, the chapter draws particularly from the study by Griffin on the survival strategies adopted by the fascist movements after the Second World War.[2]

Ruptures and Continuities

Since the 1990s, Finnish fascist organisations have had regular contacts with their Nordic comrades, and current Finnish fascism cannot be understood without the Nordic aspect both in ideology and in practices. Holding joint

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demonstrations, practicing necessary organisational and other skills, sharing ideas and practices, and eventually creating a joint Nordic organisation, Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM),[3] manifests this ever-deepening collaboration. That kind of close collaboration would have been unthinkable during the Cold War. Both parties, the Finns and the other Nordic activists, were too cautious for building official ties, as they were afraid of legal consequences. There were some obvious obstacles for a pan-Nordic collaboration besides the Finnish political position. Ideological orientation in the Nordic countries was somewhat different and was based on differing historical experiences.[4] Sweden, which had the most active radical nationalist scene, stayed militarily outside the Second Word War, while Norway and Denmark were occupied by Germany, whereas Finland was an ally of Germany between 1941 and 1944.

However, collaboration existed also during the Cold War, although it was more clandestine by nature and rarely reached joint public events or meetings. Post-Second World War contacts with the Finns were in most cases unofficial, and often denied when revealed in the newspapers or by the police. From the 1950s onwards, organisational contacts were nevertheless also developed. By the 1970s, the Swedish-based Nordic Reich Party [*Nordiska Rikspartiet*, NRP] had established a local chapter in Finland, initiating a new wave of fascist activism.

It is also worth emphasising that in Finland, although some former fascists and far-right leaders were forced to step aside from politics after the war, what characterised the post-war political system was in many ways a continuation rather than a disruption. This is indicated by the fact that, for example, former members of the radical nationalist Academic Karelia Society continued in leading positions of the society.[5] In this sense, the post-Second World War setting in Finland was more reminiscent of the political situation in Italy than in Germany, where post-war purifications were much less severe.[6]

For the Finnish fascist groups and organisations, which were officially banned by the 1948 Paris Peace Treaty, the Nordic contacts and networks provided an opportunity to maintain contacts with their ideological comrades, even if only in a clandestine manner, and thereby open a window to Europe. For their Nordic comrades, Finland was a land glorified for its battles against the Soviet Union and a buffer state against the communist threat. Additionally, Swedish soldiers taking part as volunteers in Finnish war efforts against the Soviet Union have been and still are celebrated as heroes by the Swedish fascists. This type of hero cult has included, for example, annual memorials at the grave of Gösta Hallberg-Cuula, who in the 1930s acted as head of propaganda for the Swedish National Socialist Workers' Party [*Nationalsocialistiska arbetarepartiet*] in Sweden and eventually died at the front in Finland in 1942.[7]

Internationalisation and Metapolitics

Fascist post-Second World War strategies analysed in some previous studies show a twofold pattern. Marginalised at home, fascist groups maintained their earlier links and not only created new international contacts but also

turned away from the political arena towards more subtle means of influencing via *metapolitics*. The core strategical importance of metapolitics lies in the idea, often connected to Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony, that revolution can only be achieved when its key ideological features also have extensive enough support among the population. Therefore, one should pave the way for the revolution by cultural influencing, "winning hearts and minds",[8] as much as by trying to directly gain political power.[9] The role of cultural revolution, in tandem with the political one, was already an essential feature in pre-1945 fascist movements but gained more currency post-Second World War when the movement was marginalised and in isolation.[10] These post-war ideological "mutations" of fascism and radical nationalism, internationalisation, and metapoliticisation, outlined by Roger Griffin,[11] were somewhat present also within the Finnish scene.[12]

Internationalisation refers to the fact that former fascist leaders all over in Europe tried, when marginalised in their domestic environment, to build connections with their former foreign comrades. This led to groupings and networks like the European Social Movement and World Union of National Socialists, which will be discussed in more detail below. International contacts helped groups to break their political isolation and gave mutual aid and recognition. Metapoliticisation also points towards the new means fascist movements adopted for gaining support, for example, via cultural rather than direct political means. For this purpose, ideas such as ethnopluralism and Holocaust denial were promoted. International cultural production linked the metapolitical strategy, which was developed especially within French and German "new right" from the late 1960s onwards, with the internationalisation of the movement and was shown in journals like *Nation Europa*. As has been pointed out by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke,[13] political isolation led some Nazis also to embrace occult or esoteric ideas and Aryan mythologies.[14] In Finland, this path was exemplified especially by occult radical nationalist figure Pekka Siitoin.

The post-fascist survival strategies were realised in Finland with specific tactical means and goals and via Nordic interaction, trying simultaneously to keep oneself within the limitations of the Paris Peace Treaty. Exploring the relatively unknown Cold War era, Finno-Nordic contacts and their evolution from late 1940s through the early 1990s reveal that the interaction happened at several levels: individuals and informal groups of friends turned to their Nordic comrades soon after the war in their efforts to revitalise the movement, and gradually also more formal organisational ties were created. As will be shown below, modes of collaboration were also manifold.

Practical collaboration reached from producing propaganda and accommodating foreign visitors all the way to joint shooting practices, and ideologically the Finns joined the ever-growing international networks. Part of the Nordic collaboration was also related to "Third Positionist" geopolitical strategies,[15] as, for example, advocate of third block politics Walter Horn

saw the coalition of the Nordic countries and Germany as a possible middle force between two superpowers[16] and some former fascist activists considered a third way between economic spheres of communist and capitalist countries as a viable option.[17] In his geopolitical visions, Walter Horn also referred to the theme of cultural degeneration of Western European nations.

The Nordic connections were almost vital for the Finnish fascists. The pre-war international collaboration partners of the Finnish fascists were foremost the Germans, but any links to Germany were under close surveillance after the Paris Peace Treaty and other pacts Finland made with the Soviet Union. Some pacts, like the 1948 Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance, explicitly mentioned Germany as an unwelcome, and even dangerous, partner in its military clauses. Links to Germany were also closely monitored by the Finnish Security Police.[18] Nordic countries were in this respect a different case, and Finland was also allowed to join the Nordic Council in the 1950s.

Paris Peace Treaty 1948

Before the Second World War, Finland had a relatively large and active radical nationalist scene, ranging from openly fascist groups to parties claiming to represent traditional nationalism.[19] After the Second World War, however, fascist movements were targeted explicitly in the Paris Peace Treaty between Finland and the Allies (hereafter "the peace treaty"). It was from there on the duty of the Finnish authorities to observe and, if necessary, to even ban the movements aiming at the revitalisation of fascism in Finland. The peace treaty remained one of the key points of reference in Finnish politics until the early 1990s and was regularly referred to, for example, in parliamentary debates on security issues. Besides ordering compensation for the losses or damages of the Allies, the treaty, for example, limited the size of the Finnish military.

Article 8 of the peace treaty stated that Finland had taken measures "for dissolving all organizations of a fascist type on Finnish territory, whether political, military or para-military, as well as other organizations conducting propaganda hostile to the Soviet Union or to any of the other United Nations", and that Finland "shall not permit in the future the existence and activities of organizations of that nature which have as their aim denial to the people of their democratic rights".[20] These clauses were, however, interpreted in a variety of ways, which did not always even try to follow their spirit. Hence, many types of radical nationalist organisations were founded in Finland also after the peace treaty. However, the ban was taken seriously by the comrades abroad and Swedish fascists referred to it frequently when corresponding with the Finns.

During the first post-war years, fears of Soviet occupation, and an internal coup by Finnish communists supported by the Soviets, loomed large in the imagination of the Finnish radical nationalists. This led to some

practical attempts for preparing for resistance, such as arms caches, organised both by former military members and youth groups. Ideologically, orientation was still strongly towards Germany, and some youth groups were inspired by semi-mythical resistance movements like Werwolf.[21] During the 1950s, it became evident that a communist coup was not about to happen, and relations with the Soviet Union evolved into a less threatening direction as well. Rebuilding pre-war contacts with fascist comrades abroad became a viable option for keeping the ideology or even the clandestine movement alive in Finland as well.

Swedish-Speaking Finns and the Early Initiatives for Rebuilding Nordic Connections

Links to international fascist circles provided an alternative for the Finnish groups for continuing their activities despite the peace treaty. The first cautious attempts by the Finnish fascists to recreate links to other Nordic countries after the Second World War were made by the Swedish-speaking Finns. Although somewhat discontinued due to the war and because of some post-war arrests, contacts date back to the 1930s. Finnish fascists had, for example, taken part in the activities of the Carlberg Foundation[22] and given speeches and lectures at their events.

One of the key contacts for the Finnish fascists was Per Engdahl, who promoted his form of fascist thought, "New-Swedish Socialism", and during the post war years, actively built international networks within fascist ideological milieus.[23] Most notable of Engdahl's endeavours was the so-called Malmö Movement, which acted as an umbrella organisation for several European neo-fascists and was later built into a formal organisation called European Social Movement.

Revitalising the Nordic connection among the Finnish radical nationalists was based on the ideology of Swedish nationalism. The rhetoric of Swedish nationalism changed over time due to political circumstances. For example, the rhetorical concept of Swedish *irredenta*, the idea of Swedish Finland as "East-Sweden", lost its popularity after the Åland Islands dispute and the status of the islands as part of Finland was solved in 1921. The idea of Swedes in Finland as part of the German race was also largely abandoned after the Second World War due to the negative connotations of the Hitler Regime. But some Swedish-speaking Finnish fascists continued to use these old conceptualisations even after the Second World War, especially when speaking to audiences abroad.

Swedish nationalism in Finland has been divided into two concurring approaches, those of regional and cultural nationalism, where the former stresses ethnic and national differences between Swedes and Finns and the latter focuses on the idea of one common nation based on two languages and built on the idea of Swedish language as an important aspect of Finland as a Western nation and part of the Nordic cultural community. These two

forms of nationalism have, according to Henrik Meinander,[24] been the most dominant forms within the community of Swedish-speaking Finns. Along with these main strands of regional and cultural nationalisms, racial nationalism had also been present. In the ideology of the fascist Swedish-speaking Finns, all three strands of nationalism amalgamated.

A handful of Swedish-speaking Finnish activists presented their ideas at the international "Euro-fascist" forums,[25] such as the journal *Nation Europa*, which was initiated by the European Social Movement. Eric von Born, who was known for his antisemitic writings in the 1930s, focused mostly on the important role the Swedish-speaking Finns had as creators and builders of culture. In 1954, von Born wrote a long jeremiad about the diminishing population share of the Swedes, stressing that "Swedish language is very useful as a cultural bridge to Western direction when political isolation is threatening Finland".[26]

Von Born saw, relying on the traditional image of Swedes as "coast people" (kustfolket) in Finland, that the Swedish-speaking Finns were similar kind of transmitters of culture as the Greeks in Asia Minor and on the shores of Levant. He described Swedes as "Kulturträger", transmitters of higher culture to the minor nations and as a natural aristocracy. The role of the Finnish-speaking Finns seems to be solely passive or negative, except in keeping the channels open by protecting the rights of Swedish minority; theirs is the role of the barbarian to be civilised by the Swedes. In poetical tones, von Born employed a simile in which the Swedish people were presented as a force of nature. Swedes "flooded like a wave from the sea" and, with a "vibrant force", "paved the way for a rising culture".

The apparent idea behind von Born's thinking was similar with that of the *Nation Europa*: the journal promoted an idea of Europe as a cultural mosaic which would unite around common European core principles of organic nationalism and natural hierarchies to protect "the European way of life" against the "Asian threat".[27] This ideology fit well to the needs of the Swedish radical nationalists, who could act as educators for the "politically sleeping" Finns.

More openly promoting racial nationalism, docent Axel Gadolin from the Åbo Akademi University saw that the Finnish-speaking part of the nation had nothing much to do with the Nordic countries. The Finns belonged to another, non-Aryan race and were, therefore, according to the 1930s' racial classification which Gadolin still followed, deemed as a part of the East-Baltic race. As late as in the 1970s, in his book published in German by a known far-right publisher, Gadolin, still argued in racial terms and classified the Finns only as culture bearers at best, while the Swedes belonged to a culture-founding race.[28]

Gadolin stressed the role of the Swedish-speaking Finns and especially the nobility in promoting national culture and nationalist ideology and maintained that in almost every important occurrence in Finnish history they had been the primus motor.[29] Gadolin maintained also that earlier, against

known history, in the Civil War in Finland in 1918, the Swedish-speaking Finns were all part of the "White Front" against the "Communists".[30]

In his view, however, this was changed in 1945 when a new class of politicians and businessmen was born, and simultaneously the role of the Swedes was diminished. Swedes had had a leading role in the earlier history of struggle for independence, but now he saw that the "new, politically dominant Finnish speaking class" drove Finland into the arms of the Soviet Union. The Finns are represented in a pejorative light: "Even if a Finn gives a modest impression in Stockholm and Paris due to the lack of language skills and slow demeanour, he is celebrated in Moscow where he can drown his endless thirst". According to this description, sly Russian politicians take in this way full advantage of the modest, insecure, ever-drinking Finns.[31]

The underlying assumption in Gadolin's presentation was an old one: the Finns were part of the East-Baltic Race, and therefore not politically as skilful as the Swedes who belonged to the Germanic race.[32] Gadolin continued to promote this theory throughout his career, even though, especially during the Second World War, he also occasionally included some positive elements, like toughness and persistence, into his characterisation of the Finns.[33] Unsurprisingly, these do not focus on intellect.

Gadolin as well as von Born were influenced in the 1930s among others by the race theories of Hans F.K. Günther,[34] a German professor whose work on race theory was among the most influential in Hitler's Germany. Günther had close contacts to Finland until the end of the Second World War and was friends with John Rosberg. That the Finns and Swedes in Finland were racially separated was an idea also promoted earlier by several Swedish-speaking writers in Finland, including Gadolin's uncle, Georg von Wendt, who was also a supporter of eugenics and a member of the Finnish parliament.

In the 1950s, the circle of friends into which Gadolin and von Born belonged alongside Carl-Gustaf Herlitz, the managing director for porcelain factory Arabia, was actively reactivating links with Swedish fascists. They supported the magazine *Fria Ord* financially, which was edited by Rütger Essen and was published by the National League of Sweden [*Sveriges Nationella Förbund*]. Through these channels, Herlitz managed to get his antisemitic writings published in Sweden, which also led to legal consequences. The Carlberg Foundation spread leaflets written by Herlitz at schools in Stockholm, for which its founder C.E. Carlberg was fined for incitement in 1958.

In their correspondence with Engdahl and Essen, the Swedish-speaking Finns stressed that Finland was more or less already a lost cause, and they did not want to arrange any open activism in Finland.[35] Engdahl had wished to have the Finns partake in his Malmö Movement, but to his disappointment, the Swedish-speaking Finns were too cautious for that. The participation was, however, kind of realised through another channel. A group of Finnish schoolboys took contact with Engdahl in the late 1950s, claiming they had people ready to join, and were planning to take part in elections

as well. Corresponding in German with Engdahl, they however shied away when Engdahl suggested a meeting in Finland.[36] Apparently, the schoolboys managed to make a convincing appearance, as they were also included in a journalistic account of the Malmö Movement published in the 1960s.[37] Links to the National League of Sweden did not entirely disappear even after the death of Rütger Essen. The chairman of the group contacted Pekka Siitoin as late as in 1992 and mentioned the need for Nordic collaboration between fellow national socialists to strengthen the movement.[38]

Whereas Swedish-speaking Finns saw a division between Swedish-speaking and Finnish-speaking Finns, the idea of a Nordic fascist unity was more explicitly conceptualised by Teo Snellman, grandson of the national philosopher J.W. Snellman, who during the 1930s was active in national socialist organisations and never abandoned his fascist ideas. In his writings on the German and Nordic unity during the 1950s and 1960s, Snellman, appealing to the ideas of Hitler, Himmler, and Quisling regarding the status of the Finns as a part of Germanic or Nordic family,[39] abandoned straight-forward racialism and defined the Nordic idea based on common tradition and spirit.[40]

Snellman outlined that "the genuine Nordic or Germanic manifests", for example, in music, literature, philosophy, and mysticism.[41] Snellman presented his ideas about *Führerprinzip*, cultural degeneration, revival of the national culture, and third-way politics in several articles, and occasionally also managed to publish his pieces not only in Finnish newspapers and journals, but also on Swedish fascist platforms like *Fria Ord* and *Nordisk Kamp*. With his thoughts, Snellman however seemed to be ahead of his time and never gained any followers. He was, alongside with Herlitz, one of the first writers in Finland to promote historical revisionism as well.

Anti-Communist Patriotic Youth Movements in the 1960s

Most of the post-war generation radical nationalist groups active during the 1960s turned their gaze to national history. They were often inspired by the fascist movements of the 1930s like Lapua Movement [*Lapuan Liike*] or Patriotic People's Front [*Isänmaallinen Kansan Liike*, abbreviated as IKL]. One of the groups, Patriotic Youth of Finland [*Suomen Isänmaalliset Nuoret*], initially even used a name which was also abbreviated as IKL.

Peculiar to these groups was that their main target was the communist movement in Finland, and their activism was to a large extent a reaction to the experienced hegemony of the left over the contemporary culture. Therefore, they tried to build connections with older generations and collaborated in this regard with veteran organisations. International connections were typically scarce, or even non-existent. Although never stated explicitly, these groups seem to have tried to avoid any comparison or linkage with the foreign movements or ideologies. This may also have been a purposeful act to avoid unwanted scrutiny by the security police, which considered foreign

ideas, such as national socialism or fascism, as potentially harmful but did not consider domestic nationalistic endeavours in a similar fashion. In some cases, radical anti-communist nationalism was seen by the security police as even a positive element, as it was interpreted as an attempt to protect the prevailing societal order.[42]

Some of these groups also adopted certain old ideological issues of contention, including language strife, on their agenda. In the 1920s and 1930s, the language strife had effectively split the nationalist movement into two competing factions: some were advancing the cause of national unity by focusing on the divide between Swedish and Finnish speakers, while another faction stressed the salience of class-division. Since the 1940s, the issue was mostly of marginal relevance for most of the fascist groups. It became only more prominent in the 1990s when it was taken on the agenda of the nationalist organisation Finland's Sisu [*Suomen Sisu*].

However, the language issue was also a relevant metapolitical avenue for some groups in the early 1960s. The Finnish Workers Front [*Suomalainen Työväen Rintama*], an explicitly fascist group from Lahti, advocated the idea of national unity. The language issue, that is, the status of Swedish as a national language in Finland, was for them a hindrance for reaching that goal. One group declared in their programme that "a national state is formed by one people, and an outcome of its natural evolution is that bilingualism will disappear". Laws protecting bilingualism were deemed "unnatural and reprehensible".[43] Their statements, which stressed the avoidance of any national divisions, also included a demand for national unity within the economic sector, which would be achieved by corporatist reorganisation of the unions and the state.

While emphasising national spirit as an organising principle of national unity with references to a "thousand-year Reich", the group also advocated economical third-position politics. This seems to have led the police astray: according to one analyst of the security police, their programme looked like it was "written by someone belonging to the current centre, seducing the workers but not entirely forgetting the bourgeois either".[44]

Although they initially thought of themselves also as a potential party project, the Finnish Workers Front soon evolved into a more clearly defined metapolitical direction. It was renamed as the Association for the National Unity [*Isänmaallinen Yhtenäisyysseura*], which in its programme explicitly stated that they were a non-political association and wanted to "base its activities on the same spirit our forefathers have built this land". In more practical terms, they wanted to spread living patriotism and enhance the will to defend the country. The new association gathered support from local entrepreneurs and organised events together with war veterans. Although relatively successful with more than 500 members, the Association for the National Unity was disbanded after the events of 1968 when more openly political activism was called for.[45]

Nordic Reich Party and Other National Socialist Groups in Finland in the 1970s

In Finland as well as elsewhere, 1968 proved a kind of a turning point in the evolution of radical nationalism. The role of the radical-right in the 1960s was, as put by Andrea Mammone when referring to the situation in Italy,[46] that of the "guardian of social order, the bastions of an ultra-conservative counter-revolution and, when it was possible, it moved closer to the traditional powers in society and the mainstream right". Some Finnish activists also took part in demonstrations with the left-wing activists, especially when they protested the Soviet Union during and after the Prague Spring, although some also organised counter-protests. The Association for the National Unity split into competing factions, others willing to join the rising left-wing protests, others looking for a more conservative direction. The most radical activists started to look for an alternative in openly fascist groups and ideologies, which resulted in further internationalisation of the movement. Links to Sweden proved again vital in this development.

The NRP, which was also called in its earlier stage Scandinavian Reich Party [*Skandinaviska Rikspartiet*], raised some interest in Finland as well. The party was, unlike Engdahl's Malmö Movement and other initiatives, more oriented towards German National Socialism, and possibly therefore their ideology was also easier to grasp by those Finns who glorified collaboration with Nazi Germany during the Second World War.

Based on the files of the Finnish Security Police and according to their own announcements, the magazine of the NRP, *Nordisk Kamp*, had several subscribers in Finland. Considering the party was founded in 1956, the Finns found it relatively soon. The first subscriptions of *Nordisk Kamp* to Finland were already registered in the 1950s, and Finns began to send articles and greetings to the magazine in the early 1960s. One subscriber later told the police that magazines could be sent to Finland only in a closed envelope.[47]

As a first initiative towards a more formal Finnish-Swedish collaboration, Finnish activists visited Sweden in 1964 to discuss their plans with NRP leader Göran-Assar Oredsson. They talked for hours, and Oredsson was also invited to Finland, although the visit never took place.[48] Formal collaboration was not yet an option, however, as was said by a representative of the NRP, "we have nothing against that some capable person in Finland organises some activism, but it is known that in Finland all national socialist activism is forbidden".[49]

In the early 1970s, however, NRP formed a Finnish chapter, which also published a few Finnish texts in their magazines, *NRP Bulletin* and *Nordisk Kamp*. Publishing material also in Finnish was justified by the "increased number of subscribers among the Finnish speaking members and supporters", and the party also wanted to stress "the great importance of Finland and Finns in the future Greater Nordics".[50] It appears that most of the

members and supporters of the Finnish chapter were Swedish-speaking Finns or had some other kind of connection to Sweden. Belonging to the latter group was Tapani Pohjola, who as a child during the Second World War was evacuated to Sweden and had also later lived there for several years.

Finns received instructions directly from NRP leader Oredsson who said, according to Pohjola, that one should spread party propaganda among the youth, send them to the newspapers, and put the material in such places where it would be noticed. Finns were also supposed to take action against people who had written or acted against the party ideology, and against communists especially. Following the instructions, Pohjola sent death threats to communists and drew swastikas on their home doors.[51] He was convicted in 1978 after sending a self-made letter bomb to the office of communist youth in Vasa the previous year.[52]

Pekka Siitoin and His Nordic Connections

As it was evident, NRP activism in Finland could be seen as a breach of the Paris Peace Treaty, and open activism soon halted. Most of the subsequent radical nationalist activism in Finland happened via organisations founded by the Turku-based photographer and occultist Pekka Siitoin. Initially Siitoin sought to channel his nascent political protest through metaphysics and the search for another level of reality, while also writing about UFOs. Siitoin's esoteric ideas were built upon an eclectic collection of theses influenced, for example, by Rudolf Steiner, Trevor Ravenscroft, and Satanist texts.[53] Embracing esoteric or occult ideas was an ideological escape route not only for some radical nationalists, but also for Soviet dissidents.[54] For Siitoin, esoteric ideas were early on intertwined with his antisemitism and nationalism, and he also claimed that being a member of his spiritual organisation was the first step towards joining openly political radical nationalist groups.[55]

Siitoin also had his own printing business, publishing a wide range of titles from esoteric literature and the Black Bible to his own fascist pamphlets and also selling books abroad.[56] The Black Bible, one of his best-selling items, consisted of magical texts allegedly originating from the purportedly lost sixth and seventh books of Moses. The book was marketed in radical nationalist journals in Nordic countries until the 1990s.[57]

By the mid-1970s, Siitoin's activism turned more openly towards fascist politics, as his attempts to advance his political career in more moderate movements had failed. Many of the NRP supporters joined the party of Pekka Siitoin, Patriotic National Front [*Isänmaallinen Kansallis-Rintama*, IKR], which was founded in 1976. Siitoin was also in possession of another association, which focused on occultism and spiritism and was used as a recruiting pool for the party. The party itself had around 70 members. Siitoin organised the first open national socialist demonstrations in Finland since the 1940s, and the party attracted

considerable media attention via its Nazi-type uniforms and unapologetic smear of the Soviet Union.

By the late 1970s, after Pohjola was arrested and when Siitoin was also investigated for inciting terrorist attacks in Finland, NRP took even more distance from the Finns. Siitoin had also organised shooting practices in Finland, with a few Swedish activists joining them. On 4 November 1977, all his organisations were banned by the court on the basis of the Paris Peace Treaty and as their activism was also against the stipulations of the Associations Act.

Following the ban, IKR members began a terror campaign, sending death threats to politicians and other notable people. Three weeks after the ban, the IKR party secretary made an arson attack against a communist printing house in Helsinki and planted a bomb inside the building, which did not detonate. During the following years, several similar threats and plans were made, although nothing came out of them. In 1979, one leading member also suggested that they should commit false-flag bomb attacks to show that communists were the real terrorists.[58] A year earlier, a Supo detective had aptly described the group as childish but fanatical.[59]

The leader of NRP's street organisation, Nils Mandell, a Swedish-speaking Finn at this time living in Sweden, had often been in contact with Siitoin, joined marches organised by Siitoin, and was even present during his trial.[60] Mandell also introduced Siitoin to the international circles, for example, by visiting the international radical nationalist meeting in Diksmuide, Belgium, with him. In 1981, Siitoin's party was accepted as an associate member in the World Union of National Socialists, an international umbrella organisation for national socialists, which then had its general secretariate in Aalborg, Denmark.[61] Despite Mandell collaborating with Siitoin, and most likely in fear of reprisals by the Swedish government, NRP leader Göran-Assar Oredsson claimed they had never in any form collaborated with Siitoin.[62]

Links between the NRP and Finnish activists became less frequent in the 1980s, although they never disappeared entirely. Officially NRP had cut ties with Siitoin in 1977.[63] Old contacts were occasionally still useful, and in some cases, radical nationalist collaboration was extended to other Nordic countries as well.

In 1985, a Norwegian radical nationalist Tor Petter Hadland visited Finland with Norwegian NRP member Vigdis Simonsen, and they were accommodated by a Finnish activist who had been an NRP member since 1970 and who later also joined Siitoin's party.[64] Hadland had been a member of the fascist Norwegian Front [*Norsk Front*], which was in 1980 renamed National People's Party [*Nasjonalt Folkeparti*]. The leader of the party was invited to Finland in 1983 by Pekka Siitoin.[65] Hadland had in 1984 called in a bomb threat against the Nobel Prize event in Oslo and was therefore wanted by the police.[66] He was arrested by the Finnish police after having been under surveillance for a week.[67]

In the Finnish propaganda material for NRP, the Nordic aspect was typically taken as self-certainty, without explicating what it would mean in practice. In a leaflet spread in several cities in Finland in 1970, the party claimed that "we are Nordic people and are united by our shared history".[68] The leaflet claimed it was a joint publication of NRP and two fictional Finnish entities called the Finnish National Socialist Committee [*Suomen Kansallissosialistinen Komitea*] and the National Liberation Front of Karelia [*Karjalan Kansallinen Vapautusrintama*]. In a letter sent in 1974 to a supporter, Mandell, who was still coordinating the activities in Finland, although he lived in Sweden, explained that they are a Nordic group and therefore different from anything German. For this reason, it was not appropriate to use the Totenkopf or similar symbols and one should also avoid German mysticism.[69]

According to Claes Lantz, an Åland-based Swedish activist, NRP leader Oredsson was just too timid to show swastikas.[70] Lantz himself was often in contact with Siitoin in the late 1970s. He introduced Siitoin to certain metapolitical ideas,[71] especially Holocaust denial, and Siitoin later published, for example, one denialist pamphlet by Richard Harwood.[72] Although some Swedish-speaking Finns had already written some revisionist publications,[73] this was apparently the first time any international Holocaust denial literature was published in Finnish. During the collaboration with the Swedes, other new ideas were introduced to the Finns as well. Mandell told Siitoin about the relevance of the immigration issue, reflecting fights with the Assyrian refugees in Sweden. However, due to the low level of migration in Finland, it took a long time for a full-scale anti-immigration movement to grow in Finland, and the topic became more prominent only in the late 1980s.

More generally speaking, growing interaction with their Nordic comrades changed the rhetoric of the Finnish fascists towards a more international direction. Whereas Finnish movements in the 1960s leaned on the ideas of the Finnish pre-war fascists, sometimes copying their programmes verbatim, Finnish NRP members and later Siitoin and his group adopted international rhetoric of anti-communism, antisemitism, and Aryanism.[74] For example, in 1977, Pohjola stressed in the name of his own fascist group that "the racial issue is not about the skin colour, but about the survival or destruction of the culture created by the Aryans". For him, this would mean a return to primitivism and an endless darkness, and he thus urged his audience to "hang the Marxist enemies of the fatherland and the race traitors".[75]

During the 1970s, the Finns also became a part of international fascist networks, creating connections to almost all relevant European and American groups. Joining the World Union of Nationals Socialists (WUNS), which began as an "American export" and was founded by the leader of the American Nazi party George Lincoln Rockwell,[76] exemplified the growing transatlantic influences. Although the Nordic connections had continuous

relevance, Siitoin also created links with several groups in the USA, especially after his party was banned in 1977. Arguably at the lowest ebb of his career, Siitoin kept expanding his international network at a growing pace.

Nordic collaboration also had practical benefits. For the Finnish fascists, contacts to Sweden were especially useful when spreading propaganda. Stickers and leaflets were ordered from Sweden, where they were designed and distributed by Mandell, who apparently simultaneously also produced material for the Sweden Democrats [*Sverigedemokraterna*].[77] As the material was typically based on the same, translated slogans and similar images, Finnish and Swedish groups also became ideologically more similar. Collaboration continued apparently at least until the late 1990s, when a former Finnish NRP member was convicted for incitement after he was caught spreading propaganda material ordered from Sweden.[78]

Regarding the overall strategy of the groups and parties founded by Pekka Siitoin, he also offered an interesting post-hoc explanation for his activities when trying to receive amnesty from President Urho Kekkonen. Explicitly turning vice into virtue, Siitoin insisted that "quite often 'bad' serves good and vice versa". He described how they have managed to draw leftist voters and how his party has disconnected the moderate right from the stigma of fascism. In this way, they helped, he argued, to uphold the capitalist system.[79]

Towards International Youth Culture Scenes in the 1980s

Considering the political opportunities for the fascist groups in Finland, limited severely by the peace treaty, it was almost a wonder any activism was managed to be organised. It is certainly true that for many who advocated fascist ideas, be it national socialism or other forms of ultra-nationalism, the importance of these ideas lay in their staunch anti-communism and general opposition to the prevailing system. National socialist groups appeared mostly as the most radical form of anti-system protest, even in the Soviet Union.[80] Interest in Nazi regalia and symbols by some youth groups in Finland may be seen in this light, although no actual fascist groups drawing explicitly from youth culture were organised until the 1980s.

In the mid-1980s, international neo-fascist youth culture also reached Finland, changing the milieu drastically. Although earlier fascist groups had also made appeals to younger generations, the tone was typically a patronising one and the message was negative towards new forms of culture. Here, for the first time, the fascist movements had a relatively large recruiting pool among the younger generations, and youth culture produced by the youth themself, with its style and music, made the movement somewhat more approachable, as the ideology itself did not play as large a part as in more formal adult groups or parties. Only at this stage, when

visible subculture and grass-roots level activism started to grow alongside projects for building political organisations, one can speak of an actual far-right movement in Finland.

Transnational connections of the skinhead groups, although relatively scarce in general, directed mostly to Sweden, and in smaller scale also to the UK. In the late 1980s, some activists also began to order material from the white nationalist organisations in the USA. As travelling was easy by a daily ferry connection, Finnish skinheads often visited concerts in Sweden, where leading international white power bands like *Skrewdriver* also performed.[81] The Nordic aspect was also visible in the Finnish skinhead rhetoric, which emphasised white power alongside occasional references to the Aryan myths and culture. Notably, however, and perhaps reflecting certain cultural schisms within the Nordic fascist movement, the so-called Viking rock, a relatively large phenomenon in Sweden by this time, has remained somewhat marginal in Finland.[82]

Through propaganda material produced in Sweden, racist ideas spread, however, also in Finland. Slogans popularised by a Swedish anti-immigration organisation, Keep Sweden Swedish [*Bevara Sverige Svenskt*], were taken on by the Finns, translated and printed in propaganda leaflets, which were spread by skinheads and other activists.

Anti-communism was still the key issue in the early 1980s, although communist parties continuously lost support in Finland and suffered from heavy internal schisms. As one activist has commented, attitudes started to change by the mid-1980s when Gorbachev came into power, and he "ceased to hold communism as any serious internal or external threat".[83]

Although most of the members became involved in skinhead groups for less than ideological reasons, some also had interest in party politics. Following the development which could be observed already in the 1970s, when some former affiliates of the radical nationalist groups became members of the Constitutional People's Party [*Perustuslaillinen Kansanpuolue*], later known as the Constitutional Right Party [*Perustuslaillinen Oikeistopuolue*], in the 1980s, some skinheads joined the youth league of the party. For the skinheads, there was no other viable alternative for political activism. Alcoholised Pekka Siitoin, although still leading his own party, was for most of the skinheads no more serious a candidate as he was a leader.

However, parties or even formal organisations seem to have become less important as the new fascist milieu emerged. Younger generations formed looser collectives or movements, which draw from international idols and literature as much as or even more than from Finnish predecessors. The evolution of the scene in the 1980s reminds of the one in Sweden,[84] although, as Finland was still bound by the peace treaty and its peculiar position with the Soviet Union, the movement was still to a large extent more marginal than in Sweden. Only in the 1990s when the Cold War finally ended, Finland witnessed larger scale skinhead violence and simultaneous growth of neo-fascist groupuscules.

Finnish Fascism as a Part of the Nordic Scene

The Finnish fascist and far-right movements and groups were provided especially by the Swedish activists with material and ideological means for surviving the Cold War era. As the groups were repressed in Finland on the basis of the peace treaty, there was a practical need for opening international connections. It may be that the histories of the movements in Finland and Sweden became entangled for these practical reasons, as outlined in this chapter. Although the Finnish movement was rather fragmented and marginal in some respects, the path they took did not differ much from similar development in other countries. The solutions used for escaping repressions in Finland and elsewhere were, as suggested by Roger Griffin,[85] based on two strategies: metapolitics and internationalisation. Although these strategies had been, as such, constant features within fascist movements already previously, they however gained much more salience in the post-Second World War environment when open political activism was impossible in several countries. Domestic weakness drove the Finnish groups to reach out to international networks, such as WUNS and the European Social Movement.

The importance of the Swedish connection did not go entirely unnoticed by the Finnish Security Police either. Sometimes some largely publicised events in Sweden prompted the police to also conduct more detailed investigations in Finland. Such broader investigations were conducted, for example, after an alleged coup attempt was revealed in Sweden in 1965, and after a smoke bomb attack in Stockholm in 1974 by NRP members.[86]

Entangled history meant not only material support such as printing stickers or propaganda leaflets in Sweden for the Finnish market. People within the movement moved flexibly across borders, sometimes simultaneously being members of both Finnish and Swedish organisations, as was the case especially with the NRP. Sometimes Finnish activists also played a part in the international scene, as was the case with Nils Mandell, who became an important figure in transnational propaganda production. Ideas were also exchanged, although the Swedish movement, being more powerful and without such restrictions as in Finland, was dominant in this respect.

The exchange of ideas focused not only on strategies or tactics but also extended to the ideological level. Central themes such as Holocaust denial were introduced to the Finns by the Swedes. Different historical experiences, however, sometimes also caused friction. Finland, unlike the other Nordic countries, was allied with Germany during the Second World War, and because of the war being lost, ended up under strong Soviet influence for years during the Cold War. Perhaps more importantly, Finland was not considered a part of the Viking tradition but drew historical narratives from its own epic poetry. Certain kinds of belatedness in adopting some key ideological elements, such as Aryanism, may at least partly be explained through this background.

During the Cold War, the Swedish connection was almost a matter of survival for the movement, and, if something, the links have developed

even further since that era. The paths of the Nordic fascist movements and groups in Finland have crossed so often and these interlinkages have had such importance for the movement in Finland that one may argue that the evolution of the Finnish scene cannot be fully understood without simultaneously looking also at the other side of the Bothnian Gulf.

Notes

1 Pekonen, *The New Radical Right*, 23; cf. Kestilä, "Is There Demand for Radical Right."
2 Griffin, "Interregnum or endgame?"
3 On NRM, see also Sallamaa and Malkki, "Ethnocultural and Racial Ambiguities of National Socialist State-Building."
4 Bjørgo, "Extreme nationalism and violent discourses."
5 Vesikansa, *Salainen sisällissota*. Cf. Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 40.
6 Cf. Ferraresi, *Threats to Democracy*; Beyme, "Right-wing extremism in post-war Europe;" Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*.
7 Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 1980–1999*, 439–442.
8 Bar-On, "The Alt-Right's continuation of the 'cultural war'," 57. Metapolitics as a term and idea of course predates even Hitler's regime and was coined in 1878 by Constantin Franz in his open letter to Richard Wagner. Franz's term referred to idealistic German cultural politics as opposed to "Realpolitik". See Viereck, *Metapolitics*.
9 On the post-Second World War evolution of metapolitical strategy, developed especially within French *nouvelle droit* from the 1960s onwards, see e.g., Bar-on, *Where Have All the Fascists Gone?* Regarding pre-Second World War movements and cultural influencing, see e.g., Mosse, *Masses and Man*. Cf. also Lundström, and Poletti Lundström, "Radical-Nationalist Podcasting."
10 For a more detailed discussion about the post-fascist condition, see Karcher and Lundström, "The Nature of Nordic Fascism."
11 Griffin, "Interregnum or endgame?"; cf. von Beyme, "Right-wing extremism in post-war Europe;" see also Durham, "White Hands across the Atlantic;" and Ravndal, "From Bombs to Books."
12 For an analysis from the movement perspective, see also Simi and Futrell, "Active abeyance, political opportunity." Regarding the concepts, see Karcher and Lundström, "The Nature of Nordic Fascism."
13 Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*.
14 See also Gardell, "Esoteric Nordic Fascism;" Forsell, "Hidden Knowledge and Mythical Origins."
15 Griffin, "Interregnum or endgame?" Cf. also discussion on the geopolitical Eurasianism and third way politics by Francis Parker Yockey which was inspired by e.g., Spengler's ideas, in Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*. More often "third positionism" nowadays refers to certain syncretic forms of neo-fascism, which positions itself beyond left and right, and was developed especially among Italian neo-fascists during the 1970s.
16 Horn, *Europeisk politik*.
17 See e.g., Jalander, *Hur förverkligas ett sant folkstyre?* Gaditz, *Samhället i krigets trollkrets*. Alexander Gaditz was a pen name used by C.A.J. Gadolin.
18 Cf. Kotonen, "Terminological Games."
19 Silvennoinen, Tikka, and Roselius, *Suomalaiset fasistit*; Ekberg, *Führerns trogna följeslagare*.

20 Treaties of peace with Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, and Finland.
21 Kotonen, *Politiikan juoksuhaudat*.
22 Berggren, *Blodets renhet*.
23 Berggren, "Intellectual Fascism."
24 Meinander, *Nationalstaten: Finlands svenskhet 1922–2015*, 20–21.
25 Griffin, "Interregnum or endgame?"
26 Born, "Finnland und das Zweisprachenproblem," 24.
27 Zillich, "Nation Europa."
28 Gadolin, *Von den Tataren zu den Sowjets*.
29 Ibid., 171–172.
30 Gadolin, "Die schwedische Volksgruppe in Finland."
31 Gadolin, *Von den Tataren zu den Sowjets*, 171–172.
32 Gadolin, *Von den Tataren zu den Sowjets*, 42; cf. Kemiläinen, *Suomalaiset, outo Pohjolan kansa*, 237–242. The concept East Baltic Race originates from Rolf Nordenstreng, Swedish-speaking Finnish anthropologist who wanted to differentiate between language families and racial roots, and therefore also abandoned the concept of Germanic race by renaming it as Nordic race. Even though Gadolin picked Nordenstreng's theory of East Baltic race, he still used the term Germanic race.
33 See Gadolin, *Finnland: Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*.
34 On Günther, see Karcher, "Schirmorganisation der Nordischen Bewegung," and Karcher, "Zwischen Nationalsozialismus und nordischer Gesinnung."
35 Kotonen, "Kampen för den europeiska livsstilen."
36 Kotonen, *Politiikan juoksuhaudat*.
37 Sastamoinen, *Nynazismen*.
38 National Library of Finland (NLF), Archive of Pekka Siitoin, Hedengård to Siitoin, 30 May 1992.
39 Cf. also Karcher, "National Socialisms in Clinch."
40 Kotonen, "Kampen för den europeiska livsstilen."
41 National Archives of Finland (NAF), Teo Snellmans arkiv 3, Artiklar, föredrag och skrifter 1924–1977, "Nordens germaner." Undated article draft for *Fria Ord*.
42 See Kotonen, "Terminological Games."
43 Archives of the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (Supo), file JK I s -5, report no. 1510/30 January 1963.
44 Supo, file JK I s -5, report no. 584/2 February 1962.
45 Supo, file JK II S 7 -1, Suomen Kansan Yhtenäisyysseura.
46 Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, 125.
47 Supo, person file 1a3 xc-81.
48 Supo, person file 6606, police investigation report 10/65, 11 June 1965.
49 Ibid.
50 NRP-Bulletin 4/1971.
51 Supo, file IXA1, police interrogation, 13 August 1974 (Tapani Pohjola).
52 National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), pre-trial investigation file R 77/77.
53 On Siitoin's occult and esoteric ideas, see Häkkinen and Iitti, *Valonkantajat – Välähdyksiä suomalaisesta salatieteestä*.
54 Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*; Laruelle, "The Yuzhinskii Circle;" Kaplan, "The post-war paths of occult national socialism."
55 NLF, archive of Pekka Siitoin, Pekka Siitoin to Claes Lantz, 15 January 1976.
56 Translated in Swedish, the Black Bible was sold in Sweden and Norway. The translator is not known. On the links between radical nationalism and esoteric ideas, see Gardell, "Esoteric Nordic Fascism;" Forsell, "Hidden Knowledge and Mythical Origins."

57 See, e.g., an ad in *Frihetsfacklan* 3/1996, which marketed the fifth Swedish edition. The journal was published by Swedish radical nationalist and former NRP founding member Sven Arne Lundehäll.
58 Supo, person file 6664, report no. 1056/30 August 1979.
59 Supo, person file 6669, report no. 140/2 February 1978.
60 Mandell later played a vital role in distributing radical nationalist material throughout continental Europe and designed material for the international markets. Kaplan and Weinberg, *Emergence of a Euro-American Radical Right*, 208, n. 62.
61 NLF, archive of Pekka Siitoin, Povl H. Riis-Knudsen to Pekka Siitoin, 17 June 1981.
62 NRP Bulletin 4/1977, 5.
63 NLF, archive of Pekka Siitoin, Nils Mandell to Pekka Siitoin, 20 February 1977.
64 Supo, person file 9A1-30029.
65 Supo, person file 6463, letter by Jan Ødegård to Pekka Siitoin, 9 March 1983. Reproduced in report 166/9 February 1984.
66 Simonsen, "Antisemitism on the Norwegian Far-Right;" Wilhelmsen, "From New Order to the Millennium of White Power."
67 Supo, file JK 35 I -1, report no. 1098/11 September 1985.
68 Supo, file IXA1, report no. 348/12 February 1970, Turku. On the Nordic ideas of the later pan-Nordic Movement NRM, see also Sallamaa and Malkki, "Ethnocultural and Racial Ambiguities of National Socialist State-Building."
69 Supo, file XXII C3a – 4070, report no. 50/8 January 1975.
70 NLF, archive of Pekka Siitoin, Claes Lantz to Pekka Siitoin, 7 April 1977.
71 Griffin, "Interregnum or endgame?"
72 Harwood is a pen name used by Richard Verrall, former deputy chair of the British National Front.
73 Kotonen, "Holokaustin kiistäjät ja 'kansallismielisyyden alasajo'."
74 See also Silvennoinen, "A Pragmatic Revolutionary." Anti-communism had been a strong, uniting force for the Finnish radical nationalism since the 1920s. However, Siitoin racialised the concept, explicitly connecting the idea to antisemitism and Aryanism.
75 Suomalais-Isänmaallinen Vapautusrintama, "Suomalainen, suojele rotuasi." Undated leaflet, published in 1977.
76 Kaplan and Weinberg, *Emergence of a Euro-American Radical Right*, 41.
77 Some of the stickers had the same, Mandell's post box address. Supo, file 9A1-30189, report no. 2307/13 November 1987. Cf. stickers of the Sweden Democrats, archived at http://www.sdarkivet.com/dekaler.php.
78 Helsinki District Court, judgement in case R 99/1782, 16 June 1999.
79 Kotonen, "Terminological Games;" NLF, archive of Pekka Siitoin, Siitoin to Urho Kekkonen, 23 December 1979.
80 Charnyi, "Нацистские группы В СССР В 1950–1980-е годы."
81 Veriyhteys, "Suomessa esiintyneet ulkomaalaiset RAC-yhtyeet," 6 June 2017. https://veriyhteys14.blogspot.com/2017/06/.
82 On Viking rock in Sweden, see Teitelbaum, *Lions of the North*; cf. Raposo and Sabin, "New visual identities for British neo-fascist rock." See also Sallamaa and Malkki, "Ethnocultural and Racial Ambiguities of National Socialist State-Building."
83 Tapio Linna, email correspondence, 7 May 2017.
84 Lööw, *Nazismen i Sverige 1980–1999*. See also Lundström and Poletti Lundström, "Hundra år av radikal nationalism."
85 Griffin, "Interregnum or endgame?"
86 Kotonen, "Terminological Games."

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8 Ethnocultural and Racial Ambiguities of National Socialist State-Building

Finland and the Nordic Resistance Movement

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One of the foremost manifestations of Nordic fascism today is the national socialist organisation Nordic Resistance Movement [Nordiska motståndsrörelsen, NRM], which until 2020 also had a Finnish chapter. The NRM is not the first example of Finnish participation in a Nordic fascist movement, with various instances of entangled history involving Finns covered by this volume. Nordic contacts have, in fact, occasionally been the key to the development of Finnish fascism. The ability to cooperate with Swedish fascists, as demonstrated by Tommi Kotonen, provided Finns with the means to carry on with their activities during the Cold War when fascist organisations were banned at home.[1]

Yet Finnish participation in the NRM was not entirely unproblematic. While the Nordic countries share a great deal of history, each one has also followed its own, unique path of nation state building. This means that each country has a slightly different set of symbols, myths, traumas, and tensions that have an impact on what fascist movements can draw from to justify their views and attract supporters.

A key challenge to Finnish participation in the NRM concerned, in fact, the discrepancies between the organisation's Nordic orientation and the traditions of Finnish radical nationalism. While racism towards non-whites provided the Finnish and Scandinavian members of the NRM with common ideological ground, some of the organisation's particularities and objectives were more problematic from the Finnish perspective. This was especially true with respect to the vision of a pan-Nordic state, the idea of a Nordic race, and, in a more general sense, working towards Nordic goals instead of purely Finnish ones.

This chapter explains why such ideological particularities were problematic from the viewpoint of the traditions of Finnish radical nationalism while also looking at the arguments that the NRM's Finnish chapter fielded to defend its objectives. The chapter begins with a short description

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of the NRM and then discusses the key traditions of Finnish radical nationalism and their tensions with the NRM's pan-Nordic goals. It then outlines how the NRM's Finnish branch constructed an image of Finnishness and the Finns, and how it argued for the inclusion of Finland in a pan-Nordic national socialist state. The concluding part of the chapter subsequently elaborates on those findings by situating them within the wider context of national socialist and fascist ideology and the historical evolution of radical nationalism in Finland.

The Nordic Resistance Movement and Its Finnish Chapter

The NRM is a revolutionary national socialist organisation founded in Sweden in 1997. It began as the Swedish Resistance Movement [*Svenska motståndsrörelsen*] but later spread to other Nordic countries and accordingly changed its name to the NRM. The organisation also established a leadership council comprising representatives from all Nordic chapters in 2015.[2] The NRM aims to overturn the current democratic order in the Nordic countries and create a pan-Nordic national socialist state in its stead. Its political programme, which was first published in Swedish in 2015, details the organisation's worldview and vision of a future society. It emphasises the need to halt non-white immigration into the Nordic region and remove the overwhelming majority of non-whites and other ethnic minorities from the area. The programme bases these demands on allegations of insuperable racial differences between whites and peoples understood as non-whites. It also calls for a high degree of economic autarky and a strong military, among other objectives and envisions a pan-Nordic state to secure these goals. This political entity would be governed by a leader assisted by a Nordic senate, while a pan-Nordic parliament would assume responsibility for passing legislation.[3]

The NRM's Finnish chapter was founded in late 2008 and initially called itself the Finnish Resistance Movement [*Suomen vastarintaliike*]. It included activists from Oulu, Helsinki, and Turku at first but later expanded into other areas of the country and was estimated by the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service to include around 100 members in 2018.[4] It came under legal pressure from Finland's National Police Board after a long-standing member assaulted and seriously injured a passer-by during the group's demonstration in Helsinki in September 2016. The passer-by later died after exiting the hospital against his doctor's advice.[5] The case against the group sought to establish whether it was in breach of the Finnish Associations Act and drew to a close in September 2020, when Finland's Supreme Court ordered the chapter to be disbanded.[6] While members of the group founded new organisations to circumvent the effects of the ban already during the process of proscription, they have not attempted to continue operating under the banner of the NRM itself.[7]

Finnish Radical Nationalism, National Identity, and Pan-Nordic Ideas

A key problem that the Finnish chapter faced with respect to the NRM's pan-Nordic ambitions was that the prevailing traditions of radical nationalism in the country provided little support for such thinking. Finnish national identity, to be clear, has not been constructed as an antithesis to Sweden or the rest of the Nordics – Sweden in particular has rather served as a positive other and Nordic cooperation has generally enjoyed a good reputation. Significant effort has also been put into ensuring that Finland and the Finns are seen as part of the civilised West.[8]

The most important "other" for Finnish national identity, and the key enemy of radical nationalists, has historically rather been Russia and the Soviet Union.[9] This enemy image has also covered communism by extension. While the enemy has manifested itself as an external force in the shape of Russia and the Soviet Union, it has also included a domestic dimension in the form of Finnish communists. According to radical nationalists, communists were guilty of the loss of Finnish national unity and the civil war that ravaged the country in 1918. While Finnish radical nationalist movements of the interwar period were fervently anti-Russian and anti-communist in orientation, this enemy image persisted among Cold War era groups as well.[10]

Visions of a Nordic race and a shared Nordic state have, by contrast, occupied an insignificant role in Finnish radical nationalist thinking. The relationship of Finnish radical nationalism with race has, in fact, been quite complicated. Race theories were popular and widely accepted during the 19th and early 20th centuries, when Finnish nationalism took shape, yet most race theories of that time did not see Finns as part of the Nordic or Aryan race but instead placed them among a "lower-ranking" race such as Asians (or the "Mongoloid race" as characterised by contemporaneous jargon), Turanians, or East Europeans. The notion of Finns being an Asiatic race in particular persisted well into the 20th century even though Finnish researchers attempted to rectify the idea and proposed, among other things, that Finns represent an East Baltic people that share many traits with the Nordic race.[11]

Further adding to tensions around race theories was the way in which they were used in domestic power struggles at the turn of the century. While Finland was a part of Sweden until annexed by Russia in 1809, the Finnish elite remained Swedish-speaking even under Russian rule. The 19th century, however, saw the emergence of the Fennoman movement, which called for improvements in the status of the Finnish language. The latter half of the century, indeed, witnessed many reforms and cultural, educational, and scientific activities that aimed to develop Finnish culture and portray Finnish as a language of high culture and education.[12]

Yet another nationalist movement also emerged in Finland during the 19th century, among the Swedish-speaking population. While several Fennoman figures were Swedish speakers, the movement was also fiercely resisted by

a part of the Swedish-speaking elite. This resistance materialised as the so-called Svecoman movement, which claimed that Finnish was not a language of civilisation and could not become one. The movement also alleged that the degree of civilisation in Finland was dependent upon the Swedish language and the higher mental abilities of those who spoke it, as they were of the Germanic race and superior to Finns. This argument of superiority was employed in opposition to the introduction of universal suffrage and the creation of a unicameral parliament in Finland in 1906, as such reforms were seen as placing power in the hands of those less capable.[13]

These historical traditions help to explain why the idea of a Nordic race has not become a strong point of identification within Finnish radical nationalism. Racial arguments divided rather than united Finns during the formative period of Finnish nationalism while the language issue similarly proved to be a point of strong contention. A significant part of Finnish radical nationalists in the interwar period, moreover, also argued for the prominence of the Finnish language.[14] While the language issue has become of lesser importance during later decades, its legacy remains visible in the perception of Swedish speakers considering themselves better than Finns, and in attempts to abolish the status of Swedish as an official language in Finland.

Notwithstanding the complexities above, however, there have been attempts to construct Finnishness that bear reminiscence to racial thinking. Prior to the Cold War in particular, Finnish nationalists envisioned the forging of ties with other Finnic peoples, or the speakers of Finno-Ugric languages. This thinking manifested itself in the vision of a "Greater Finland" that would include East Karelia in particular and, in its more grandiose form, all the areas inhabited by Finnic peoples.[15] The area of Karelia has, overall, occupied a significant role in the Finnish national imagination as a mythic cradle of pure, unadulterated Finnishness.[16]

It should also be mentioned that the post-Cold War era has seen Finnish radical nationalism acquire new features. While anticommunism and the hatred of Russia still occupy a role in the thinking of some groups, racism and opposition to multiculturalism have assumed even greater importance and constitute ideological tendencies that many groups share. These inclinations began to gain traction in the 1980s, were most visibly manifested in the Finnish skinhead movement during the 1990s, and have focused on Muslims and dark-skinned people in particular in the 21st century.[17]

Such ideas and traditions of Finnish radical nationalism that would have supported the NRM's Nordic agenda would have been easiest to locate among the Swedish-speaking section of the radical nationalist movement or in less prominent manifestations of Nordic interaction like the Cold War era cooperation between Finns and the Nordic Reich Party [*Nordiska Rikspartiet*].[18] Yet these largely fall outside the mainstream of Finnish radical nationalism, while the idea of a Nordic state, in its own terms, also indicates the loss of independence rather than an improvement in the standing of the Finnish nation.

Indeed, as noted by Esa Holappa, the founder and former leader of the NRM's Finnish chapter, even the group's members themselves privately expressed reservations over the idea of a pan-Nordic state while nonetheless supporting the concept of Nordic cooperation in a more general sense. The spirit of Finnish nationalism, Holappa claims, was strong within the group, and trying to override it with racial nationalism proved to be exceedingly difficult.[19]

The NRM's Understanding of Finnishness and the Finns

In public, however, the Finnish chapter subscribed to the NRM's strategic goal. With such a historical burden as described above, it nevertheless faced substantial challenges when arguing for Finland's inclusion in a pan-Nordic state and an understanding of the Finns as part of a Nordic race. This study, indeed, now turns to the material[20] produced by the group in order to demonstrate how it responded to those challenges. It first lays out the group's perception of Finnishness and the Finns, and then looks at how it argued for the inclusion of Finland in a pan-Nordic state. As will be revealed, the group both rejected earlier perceptions of Finnishness, the Finns, and Finland's desired alignment with other countries and nations, and attempted to introduce new, compensatory interpretations in their stead. The empirical findings are subsequently contextualised by situating them within the wider framework of national socialist and fascist ideology, Finnish history, and the traditions of radical nationalism in the country.

Refuting Earlier Understandings of Finnishness

The formation of Finnish national consciousness in the 19th century, the group argued, was plagued by several problems. One was the corruption of genuine Finnishness with outside influences. Finnish nationalists of the era belonged to the social elite and were burdened by Christian-bourgeoisie morality. They tainted elements of genuine Finnishness with international and Christian influences while also creating perceptions about Finnish culture without any basis at all. An understanding of Finnish folk music as melancholy and dark, the group claimed, is one such example.[21]

Equally erroneous, it continued, were 19th-century attempts to construct an image of Finnishness based solely on the era of written culture in country. The influential author and nationalist thinker Zacharias Topelius in particular is to blame for this, as he overlooked the impact of those historical developments that preceded the emergence of written culture in Finland. Topelius and other linguistic nationalists failed to appreciate the archaic national spirit that had evolved during earlier millennia and had been shaped by such factors as genetic ones.[22]

Some 19th-century figures were, on the other hand, held in a higher regard by the group. The political views of the statesman and philosopher Johan Vilhelm Snellman, it claimed, were in several respects reminiscent of

national socialism. Snellman perceived true freedom as tantamount to full-fledged Finnish citizens being able to influence the composition and governance of their society, while his views on the role of the nuclear family and agriculture as key elements of Finnish culture are similarly commendable.[23]

Yet even Snellman's views on the proper way of ordering Finnish society did not fully escape criticism. Snellman objected to revolutionary, extraparliamentary radicalism, the group explained, and his views on the equality of the strong and the weak, as well as the non-applicability of the laws of nature to human society, are similarly alien to national socialism.[24]

Apart from 19th-century theories of Finnishness, the group also objected to later understandings of the phenomenon. Pacifism, electoral democracy, and value pluralism are alien to genuine Finnishness, it scoffed, while claiming that contemporary Finnish culture also suffers from such ailments as multiculturalism, hedonism, economic injustice, and the exploitation of nature.[25]

Refuting Earlier Understandings of the Racial Background of the Finns

The group furthermore railed against earlier perceptions of the Finns' racial background and insisted on the nation's non-Asiatic origins. Earlier understandings of the Finns as an Asiatic (or "Mongoloid") people, it argued, were based upon the proximity of the Finnish language to those spoken by Asiatic or "mixed-race" peoples. This, in combination with the prevalence of high cheekbones among Finns and the colonialist attitudes of Indo-European countries, produced an understanding of the Finns as an Asiatic people.[26]

Yet that perception is inaccurate, the group insisted. It referred to the anthropologist Karin Mark's Mongoloid index from 1970 to demonstrate that the Finns are, in fact, more strongly related to groups such as Estonians, and farther away from Mongoloids than from the Turks, for example.[27] The group also refuted the misperception of Finns as an Asiatic people by alleging that research on so-called nuclear DNA, which defines one's racial characteristics, demonstrates that Finns are genetically closest to Germanic peoples.[28] It furthermore questioned earlier theories that based their perception of the Finns as an Asiatic people on the prevalence of Haplogroup N among Finns and noted that the haplogroup is, in fact, less prevalent among those peoples whose Asiatic features are the most prominent – the Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and the Mongolians.[29]

Language as an Element of Finnishness

Given that the group, then, rejected such earlier perceptions of Finnishness and the Finns, it was forced to look elsewhere to establish an alternative understanding of the phenomena. While it did see language as one feature of Finnishness,

this element was portrayed as secondary in importance to race. The NRM's Finnish chapter, as later described, also saw linguistic factors as less important than racial ones when determining the kinship between peoples.[30]

Values and Mentalities as Manifestations of Finnishness

Values and mentalities were, on the other hand, regarded by the group as key manifestations of Finnish identity. Many such elements, it claimed, trace their genesis to the past and to the pre-Christian era in particular.[31]

A strong sense of social justice and cohesion, for one, permeated the Finnish society of pagan times and were reflected in its legal system. While the punishments prescribed were occasionally brutal, they not only aimed to sanction the individual transgressor, but to preserve the social order as a whole.[32] This sense of social justice, the group added, was also characteristic of the economic dynamics that governed pre-Christian Finland. Ancient Finns saw wealth as something to be distributed according to one's effort and favoured locality, self-sufficiency, and small-scale joint ventures instead of monopolies.[33]

Alongside a sense social justice, militancy and the spirit of self-defence were key values to pre-Christian Finns. Free men carried weapons, with ancient Finns forming a battle-hardened and merciless warrior nation, the group claimed.[34] A plethora of other pagan-era values and mentalities such as loyalty towards one's tribe, a sense of duty, and a strong social hierarchy were also seen as constituting the essence of Finnishness.[35] The group furthermore portrayed the heteronormative, patriarchal nuclear family as a valuable institution that predated the arrival of Christianity into Finland.[36]

It should be noted, on the other hand, that while the NRM's Finnish chapter saw the pre-Christian era as the temporal origin of many such values and mentalities, it did not claim that those virtues immediately withered with conversion. The group rather maintained that they persisted – albeit weakened by such forces as Judeo-Christianity and Freemasonry – until the mid-1900s, when urbanisation generated a values vacuum that was filled by radical leftist and, later, multiculturalist and capitalist morals.[37] A sense of militancy as key to Finnishness was, for example, reflected in the group's material on early 20th-century Finnish history as well. Such texts valorised those pre-independence movements and individuals that violently opposed Russian rule over Finland, the interwar manifestations of Finnish fascism, and the country's battle against the Soviet Union during the Second World War.[38]

Humanity's Bond with Nature as a Feature of Finnishness

Apart from the values and mentalities above, humanity's close relationship with nature figured as fundamental to the group's understanding of Finnishness. Here, too, it saw the phenomenon as predating Christianity. The forest, it claimed, provided ancient Finns with shelter, food, and warmth

and was well respected by them.[39] Yet the relationship was not invariably benign as battling against the harsh natural conditions of the north was also a key feature of Finnish existence thousands of years ago.[40] The northern environment was, in fact, portrayed by the group as a force that refined the racial composition of the Nordic peoples in general, as it weeded out weaker elements by favouring mentally stable individuals capable of planning, innovation, and problem-solving.[41]

Alongside benefiting from the environment and battling against it, the group continued, pre-Christian Finns also perceived themselves as akin to other parts of the biosphere and subject to the dynamics of nature. Ancient Finns likened humanity to grain as both sprang from the earth and were dependent upon it, while the sacred tree that each household in pre-Christian Finland worshipped reflected an understanding of the individual's submittal unto the laws of nature and to one's bloodline.[42] Nature, indeed, also figured as a source of spirituality. Finnish pagan deities manifested themselves as the forces and elements of nature and symbolised such ideals as militancy and racial loyalty.[43]

Although the group saw the arrival of Christianity as having initiated the corruption of this element of Finnishness as well, it nonetheless maintained that the process of deterioration was not immediate. It was only when urbanisation truly began to take root in Finland after the Second World War that the bond was ultimately severed.[44]

The Racial Heritage and Composition of the Finns

It is important to note that while the group characterised the elements above as manifestations of a genuine Finnishness, it did not claim that they had evolved in isolation during pre-Christian times. Finnishness was rather described as a mixture of the values and wisdom that had emerged among various white populations and arrived in pagan Finland via migration and trade.[45] The Finnish mindset, in other words, was not seen as fully exceptional to Finns, but rather as one variation of the wider landscape of white mentalities. And underlying that landscape, the group elaborated, was something fundamental and immutable – the very genetic makeup of the white race itself. Human societies, it stressed, are an expression of their racial composition, with the white human being forming the prerequisite of both Finnish and European culture.[46]

The group's perception of the Finns as a racial category, indeed, excluded non-whites or, more specifically, Asians and dark-skinned people alongside Jews and Roma.[47] Yet the NRM's Finnish chapter also went into detail when describing the alleged genetic heritage of those considered a part of the nation. Having established the non-Asiatic racial character of Finns, as described above, the group yet again looked into the ancient past to construct an alternative historiography of the Finns' genetic origin. It traced the formation of this lineage several tens of thousands of years into the past. The ancestors of the white race, the group claimed, migrated into Europe from the

Middle East during the Weichselian glaciation and supplanted the region's Neanderthal population. The fluctuation of temperatures during that epoch also produced population movements inside Europe, with those white groups that had spread into the north being intermittently forced to migrate southwards, into so-called refugia in the Balkan and Iberian regions and the area of modern-day Ukraine. Elements of the Iberian refugium merged with those of the Ukraine one towards the end of the glaciation, forming the population group that Finns primarily originate from. Additional waves of Baltic, Germanic, and Scandinavian migration into Finland during prehistoric and medieval times further contributed to the genetic makeup of Finns. The forefathers of modern-day Finns, the group summarised, thus originate from the same populations as the forefathers of other whites.[48]

Alongside a white population group, the Finns were also characterised as a Nordic one. There was, however, some ambiguity as to just how uniform the group perceived the genetic makeup of the Nordic peoples to be. While the Finnish chapter occasionally characterised them as constituting one genetic entity, it also conceded at times that there is genetic variation – albeit minor – between Finns and the other Nordic peoples as well as within the Finnish population itself.[49] Such genetic variation, as later described, was not, however, seen by the group as an obstacle to Nordic cooperation.

It should, of course, also be stressed that the group did not see all white Finns as deserving membership in the national community. The Finnish chapter's national socialist convictions were, indeed, also visible in its support for eugenics. It lamented the dismantling of Finland's eugenics programme in the 1960s and hailed the early 20th-century radical nationalists Martti and Lauri Pihkala, Hilja Riipinen, and the geneticist Harry Federley as figures who pursued a racial vision of the Finnish national community and understood the importance of improving the nation's genetic health by means of sterilising or otherwise isolating from society the mentally and physically challenged, alongside other groups deemed as unfit to procreate.[50]

Making the Case for a Pan-Nordic State

How did the group, then, argue for the inclusion of Finland and the Finns in a pan-Nordic state? Such an idea, as earlier noted, has traditionally not figured as part of Finnish radical nationalism and has little inherent attraction in the milieu. A part of the material studied, indeed, concentrated on responding to radical nationalist fears over the organisation's goals.

Protecting Finnish Culture and Language in a Pan-Nordic State: Regaining Finnish Independence

While the domestic opponents and competitors of the NRM often criticised the group for its alleged intent to sacrifice Finnish culture and language at the altar of Nordic national socialism, the group itself refuted such claims. It stressed

that the NRM is dedicated to protecting the cultural and linguistic heritage of each Nordic country even within a pan-Nordic state and furthermore emphasised that rather than seeing the NRM as a threat to Finnish identity, it is the contemporary political elite of Finland that poses such a peril.[51]

While the group was furthermore accused of attempting to dismantle Finnish independence, its material rather pushed the narrative of a battle to *regain* independence. This narrative was grounded in the group's perception of contemporary Finland having little sovereignty to surrender in the first place. Finland, it argued, had become politically, culturally, financially, and militarily subjugated by outside forces and their domestic lackeys, with Finns facing the threat of racial annihilation as a result.

The group saw Finland's joining the European Union as one decisive blow against its political sovereignty. Finnish power to pass legislation, it argued, had been transferred to Brussels, while EU-controlled domestic politicians had allowed throngs of non-whites into the country. Alongside the European Union, institutions such as the media and international humanitarian organisations were also portrayed as bent on furthering Finnish extinction, with domestic actors like the judicial system and educational sector furthermore seen as participating in the process.[52]

Equally significant to the absence of Finnish sovereignty, the group claimed, was the country's loss of control over its financial affairs. Contemporary Finland not only lacked its own currency,[53] but its foreign debt and membership in international financial treaties and institutions had rendered the country hostage to a global financial elite[54] that used its power to further fuel the destruction of Finland and the Finns. Here, too, foreign malice was compounded by domestic collaboration. The group strongly criticised the Finnish government's selling of critical infrastructure and natural resources to foreign actors, as well as the creation of an immigrant-dominated cheap labour reserve in Finland.[55] The loss of Finnish sovereignty, it furthermore expounded, had also been brought about by military cooperation with NATO, which allowed foreign troops into the country.[56]

The alleged gravity of the situation was underscored by the parallels that the group drew between contemporary Finland and the country's situation in the early 20th century. Just as the Finns of the past were repressed by a hostile foreign power – the Russian empire – so too are contemporary Finns, it claimed; just as the social elite of early 20th-century Finland tried to secure its status by framing patriotism as terrorism and the defence of one's fatherland as a crime, so too acts the contemporary political elite. Yet while the Russian empire attacked Finland's constitution, dismantled the Finnish military, and sought to Russify Finland's monetary system and customs control, contemporary repression is even more serious in nature as it seeks to replace the Finnish people itself with non-whites, the group purported.[57]

The NRM's Finnish chapter, in turn, portrayed itself as part of a continuum of actors striving for Finnish sovereignty. According to such historiography, the group proclaimed the same anti-elite, revolutionary message as

those Finns who fought against Russian oppression in the early 20th century. The chapter furthermore framed itself and its supporters as carrying the torch of interwar radicalism as exemplified by organisations like the Lapua Movement [*Lapuan like*] and the Patriotic People's Movement [*Isänmaallinen kansanliike*] – this despite the fact that many such actors would have likely balked at its vision of a pan-Nordic state.[58]

The Death of a "Greater Finland" and the Primacy of Genetic Over Linguistic Ties

While drawing historical parallels with early 20th-century radical nationalists, the group nevertheless also rejected elements of their ideology. The dream of a "Greater Finland" was one such element. This objective, the group argued, fails to resonate among modern-day Finns, while the population of Eastern Karelia was also heavily Russified after the Second World War. It furthermore rejected an alliance with Russia's Finnic tribes – the Finns' linguistic kin – by arguing that genetic factors should be given primacy in determining the kinship between peoples.[59]

The alleged genetic proximity between Finns and the other Nordic peoples was, indeed, employed by the group to defend its vision of Nordic unity. The Nordic peoples, as described above, were characterised as either a genetic whole or as a racial entity with insignificant internal variation. Failing to support the Finns' genetic kin would, in fact, constitute a betrayal of one's race, the group argued.[60] Such an argument should be seen as carrying considerable weight when juxtaposed against the centrality of race in its worldview.

The Long Historical Roots of Nordic Cooperation and Animosity

The group also pointed to historical examples of cooperation between the Nordic peoples in order to argue for modern-day collaboration. The Carolean army of the 17th and 18th centuries was composed of both Swedes and Finns, it alleged, while later examples of cooperation between Finland and Sweden similarly abound. Swedes, for example, assisted Finland in the Second World War by allowing the evacuation of Finnish children into Sweden and by furnishing a volunteer force to fight side by side with the Finnish army.[61]

While the group acknowledged that some Finns hold a grudge against Swedes for historical reasons, it also tried to dispel such animosity by framing it as based on ideologically irrelevant factors or as the result of hostile propaganda. Members of the Swedish and Swedish-speaking Finnish bourgeoisie, the group explained, looked down on ordinary Finns, while some Finns still see Swedes as smug aristocrats who represent the very opposite of sullen, down-to-earth Finns. Yet, the Swedish and Swedish-speaking Finnish bourgeoisie's views of ordinary Finns were a result of economic

rather than racial factors – the more prosperous classes tend to look down upon the less fortunate – while Finnish understandings of Swedish arrogance meanwhile trace their genesis to so-called Zionist television propaganda. It is the very objective of the NRM, as well as national socialism in general, to eliminate economic injustice as class divisions form an obstacle to racial objectives, the group emphasised.[62]

Fending Against Foreign Pressure and Pooling Nordic Resources

A part of the group's argumentation for a pan-Nordic state was, however, rather practical in nature. While it claimed to be fighting for the restoration of Finnish independence, as described above, it was also clear from the group's material that it did not believe a national socialist Finland could survive on its own. The group expected, in other words, that the establishment of national socialist rule would be followed by attempts to bring it down. The NRM's Finnish chapter pointed to pressure against Libya and the Axis powers as examples of the treatment that nationalist-minded countries aiming for self-sufficiency and independence from global financial structures should expect and raised the possibility that hostile Western countries might try to turn any national socialist state into a new Vietnam – the scene of an ideological war.[63]

Combining forces with like-minded countries was, by consequence, proposed as a remedy to such a peril. Here, in fact, the group pointed to one rare precedent of such thinking among Finnish radical nationalists – the military and political figure Paavo Susitaival, who had raised the possibility of an alliance by Finland, Sweden, and Norway during the Cold War.[64] In addition to providing adequate military protection from hostile outsiders, the group furthermore argued, Nordic unity would alleviate economic pressure against Finns. The pooling of Nordic natural resources and economic know-how, alongside an independent central bank and a combined Nordic labour force, would render the region highly self-sufficient and allow the implementation of efficient economic policies.[65]

The Ambiguous Political Form of a Pan-Nordic State

Notwithstanding the arguments above, the exact political form of the proposed pan-Nordic entity remained slightly unclear in the material studied. While referred to as, indeed, a pan-Nordic *state*, the NRM's Finnish chapter often also chose to avoid governmental jargon altogether and rather talked of *Nordic cooperation* as the organisation's strategic objective.[66] The print publication *Kansallinen Vastarinta* meanwhile introduced the concept of a *commonwealth of Nordic nations* where *national socialist republics* would work together within the context of a *Nordic realm*.[67] The exact administrative arrangement that a national socialist Finland would have headed towards remained, in other words, something of a question mark in the material by the group.

Contextualising the Narratives and Their Ambiguities

While the findings above provide an understanding of how the group saw Finnishness, the Finns, and the rationale behind Finland's inclusion in a pan-Nordic state, such narratives did not emerge in isolation but were rather conditioned by a number of ideological and historical factors. The following part of the study sheds light on these factors while also elaborating on certain ambiguities and paradoxes inherent to the material.

The Influence of National Socialist and Fascist Ideals and the History of Finnish Radical Nationalism

The group's understanding of Finnishness strongly reflected national socialist ideals and it might, in fact, be conjectured that such ideals guided its quest to locate the constituent elements of the phenomenon. The significance of militancy to Finnish identity and an emphasis on violent struggle as part of the nation's history, for one, echoed values fundamental to national socialist and, in a wider sense, fascist ideology. An understanding of existence as a struggle that sees the strong vanquish the weak was, indeed, central to both Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.[68]

A focus on humanity's bond with nature as an element of Finnishness was similarly reminiscent of national socialist ideals. The thinking of Povl H. Riis-Knudsen, a post-war Danish national socialist and a major ideological influence on the NRM as a whole, was reflected, among other things, in the perception of humanity as a part of the natural world and one subject to the laws of nature.[69] The group's understanding of the northern environment as an external force that conditioned the genetic composition of the Nordic people furthermore tied to ideological debates in Nazi Germany over the role of environmental factors in determining the racial makeup of human populations.[70]

That the group saw genuine Finnishness as having been corrupted by degenerative social forces meanwhile echoed the *palingenetic* myth at the core of fascism – a vision of national rebirth through a revolution that would defeat those forces of decay and restore the nation's true principles.[71] That it traced the genesis of true Finnishness into the pagan past and framed Christianity as having had a corruptive influence on it was furthermore in line with certain currents of national socialist ideology and also reminiscent of the strong veneration of the pagan past by other chapters of the NRM.[72] Yet it also presented paradoxes. Seeking inspiration in the pagan past has not been unknown to earlier Finnish radical nationalists, yet often the source of such inspiration has been the *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic.[73] While some articles by the NRM's Finnish chapter did discuss the *Kalevala's* value to earlier manifestations of nationalism in the country, it did not figure as a major source of inspiration to the group itself. A part of the material, in fact, rejected the *Kalevala* as tainted by Christianity and a book that arbitrarily modifies and combines Finnish myths.[74]

While there have been, moreover, earlier manifestations of Finnish nationalism that have openly rejected Christianity, these are not the ones that the group wanted to identify with.[75] Indeed, many of the groups and actors that it venerated, such as the interwar Lapua Movement let alone the radical nationalist "warrior priest" Elias Simojoki, were dedicated to defending Christianity.[76] The strong role of Christianity in early 20th-century Finnish nationalism is also reflected in the fact that such convictions were even expressed by Finnish volunteers in Nazi Germany's Waffen-SS and that religion formed a topic of contention between them and their German counterparts.[77]

It is, overall, striking how strongly the group identified with Finnish movements and actors from the early 20th century. This inclination should be seen as reflective of the perceived lack of success by later radical nationalist organisations in the country. The group saw the post-war neo-Nazi figure Pekka Siitoin as having stained the image of national socialism in Finland, yet it also characterised domestic movements at the turn of the millennium as having committed a series of mistakes that resulted in their downfall and brought about a succession of "lost decades" for Finnish radical nationalists.[78]

The primacy of race in the group's understanding of Finnishness, the Finns, and the ties that bind population groups to each other was, of course, also characteristic of national socialist ideals. While it might initially appear peculiar that the group invested into refuting late 19th- and early 20th-century theories of the Finns' Asiatic background, perceptions of the Finns' racial "inferiority" vis-à-vis Scandinavians have proven surprisingly persistent even among some domestic national socialists.[79] Yet, the rejection of the Finns' alleged Asiatic background also reflected the group's intent to draw a strong distinction between whites and non-whites – the latter of which Asians are seen a part of – when defining the racial composition of the Finnish nation. Finnishness as a racial category, that is, was most often conflated with whiteness and non-whites firmly rejected as genetic outsiders. Interestingly, however, the NRM's Finnish chapter did not draw distinctions of a corresponding strength between all population groups *within* the white race. While the Finns, as earlier noted, were also characterised as part of the Nordic race, it remained slightly unclear where the distinction between the Nordic and East European races lay. The group's material on nuclear DNA, for example, demonstrated greater genetic proximity between Finns, Poles, and Russians than between Finns and Icelanders – the latter of which were to be included in the proposed pan-Nordic state.[80]

Given Hitler's perception of Poles and non-Germanic Russians as racially inferior,[81] the unwillingness to strongly distinguish between the Nordic and East European races appears rather strange, yet it reflects certain post-Cold War shifts within the field of national socialist ideology. Rather than reproduce the anti-Slavic views of the Third Reich, that is, some contemporary national socialists in the West see East Europeans as part of a wider

in-group – the white or European race – while some national socialists in Eastern Europe also appear willing to overlook the historical burden of Nazi views (and treatment) of Slavs, and to reinterpret Slavs as part of the same in-group as their ideological brethren in the West.[82]

Negotiating the Ideological Burden of a Pan-Nordic State

The vision of a pan-Nordic state, as earlier indicated, has traditionally not figured as a central tenet of Finnish radical nationalism. Such an objective might rather be characterised as having formed an ideological burden to the group – something also reflected in certain facets of its argumentation. The ambiguity over the political form of the pan-Nordic entity, for example, could be seen as a deliberate rhetorical strategy intended to shield the group from outside accusations of surrendering Finnish independence. There are other indications in the material as well that the group understood how difficult the vision of a pan-Nordic state might be for the wider radical nationalist community in Finland to swallow. It tried to woo potential supporters by, for example, encouraging them to forget the organisation's Nordic orientation for the time being and rather join forces with the NRM and other radical nationalists to defeat a more immediate threat: the influx of non-whites into Finland and their presence within the country.[83]

Yet the terminological ambiguity might also be seen as reflective of the ambivalence that the NRM's Finnish members themselves felt towards the idea on a pan-Nordic state. As earlier noted, the group's founder and former leader, Esa Holappa, remarks in his autobiography how the spirit of Finnish nationalism reigned within the chapter and how its members privately expressed reservations over the idea of incorporating their country into a pan-Nordic state.

The level of political independence that Finland would have enjoyed within the pan-Nordic state is, in fact, something of a question mark. While the studied material did feature the idea of Finnish sovereignty in matters of national significance – indeed, the creation of a *Finnish national socialist republic* – there is no mention of such an arrangement in the Finnish-language version of the NRM's political programme. Slightly paradoxically, it is the original Swedish-language version of the programme that includes a mention of how the NRM would encourage national decision-making in matters of national significance while also allowing the Nordic countries to retain their languages and legislation provided that such laws fall in line with the Nordic state's constitution.[84] Even when allowing for this, however, the level of Finnish sovereignty would have remained unclear as both programmes fail to clearly define those political matters that fall within the purview of national administrations. The administrative role of the proposed pan-Nordic parliament, which is described in the programmes as tasked with passing new legislation, would have, on the other hand, also proven to be a mystery had the Nordic countries been allowed to retain their earlier laws.[85]

The Perceived Benefits of Going Nordic

Given the reluctance of the NRM's Finnish members to accept the idea of a pan-Nordic state and their understanding of the unpopularity of such a vision among the country's radical nationalist milieu, one is driven to question the rationale behind establishing a Finnish chapter to the organisation in the first place. Why align with a vision that even the group's members themselves were not entirely comfortable with?

Holappa notes that he saw international assistance as crucial to the success of any national socialist movement in Finland. Sweden was geographically close enough to form the source of such assistance, he adds, while the Swedish Resistance Movement appeared sufficiently successful and established and its activism easily transferable to Finland.[86] Holappa's decision to contact the Swedish Resistance Movement was, of course, also influenced by The Order's Richard Scutari, with whom he was in correspondence, and who suggested that he contact the Swedish organisation's deputy leader Magnus Söderman.[87] As earlier noted, moreover, while the members of the Finnish chapter viewed the vision of a pan-Nordic state with scepticism, they were supportive of the idea of Nordic cooperation in a more general sense.

The decision to align with the Swedish Resistance Movement could therefore be characterised as more strategic than ideological in nature, and one aimed at strengthening national socialism back home. The fact that some of the group's arguments for a pan-Nordic state were quite practical in nature is furthermore in line with such a strategic approach. Aligning with the other Nordic countries was, for example, portrayed as a military and economic necessity to the survival of a national socialist Finland – a marriage of convenience, in effect.

There are, in fact, also indications that some members from the other chapters of the NRM may have been less than enthusiastic about Finnish participation in the organisation. While a comprehensive assessment of the topic lies beyond the scope of this study, it is worth noting that Holappa mentions in his autobiography how Simon Lindberg, the leader of the NRM from 2015 onwards, maintained a distant attitude towards Finns while also cracking jokes about them. Equally, Holappa recounts, Swedish members of the NRM were keen to remind him, the leader of the Finnish chapter, that the organisation as such had been founded in Sweden and had a Swedish leadership.[88]

Conclusion

The NRM's Finnish chapter, as demonstrated by this study, pursued a multivariate rhetorical strategy to constructing an interpretation of Finnishness and the Finns, and to making a case for the inclusion of Finland in a pan-Nordic state. It refuted earlier perceptions of Finnish identity that had emerged during and after the 19th century and rather traced the origins of

genuine Finnishness into the pre-Christian past. Key to this interpretation were values and mentalities such as militancy, as well as a close bond with nature. Racial factors were, on the other hand, portrayed by the group as the mainspring of such values and mentalities, and of key importance to defining the Finns as a population group. The NRM's Finnish chapter rejected earlier theories of the Finns' Asiatic background and rather characterised them as a white and Nordic racial group, excluding non-whites and minorities such as Jews and Roma from the national community.

The group's narrative for the inclusion of Finland in a pan-Nordic state similarly included refutations of earlier claims and the creation of compensatory interpretations. It rejected allegations of trying to surrender Finnish independence and rather claimed that it was fighting to restore such a state of affairs while also alleging that the Finnish language and culture would be protected within a pan-Nordic state. The group similarly characterised attempts to resurrect the dream of a "Greater Finland" as impractical and rather offered alignment with the Finns' alleged racial kin – the other Nordic peoples – as a more viable option. It pointed to the historical traditions of Nordic cooperation to defend the idea and furthermore characterised it as an economic and military necessity to the survival of a national socialist Finland.

The group's interpretations and narratives were strongly reflective of the wider landscape of national socialist and fascist ideologies. An emphasis on militancy, national rebirth, and a close bond with nature alongside the centrality of race to defining the nation, for example, echoed key tenets of such intellectual traditions. That the group strongly identified with early 20th-century Finnish radical nationalists meanwhile reflected the lack of success by corresponding movements in post-war Finland. It was also clear that the vision of incorporating Finland into a pan-Nordic state was ideologically problematic to both the group's members and to the wider radical nationalist milieu that they tried to persuade. This, in turn, led to ambiguities in the way in which the political character of the planned pan-Nordic entity was described by the group.

Notes

1 Kotonen, *Politiikan juoksuhaudat*, 55–68, 157–174.
2 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarinen äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 39–40.
3 Nordiska motståndsrörelsen, *Vår väg*, 8–11, 15–17, 23–24, 37, 45–47.
4 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarinen äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 39–41.
5 The NRM activist was later convicted of aggravated assault with racist intent instead of homicide. See Sallamaa and Kotonen, "The case against the Nordic Resistance Movement."
6 Ibid.
7 Kotonen, "Proscribing the Nordic Resistance Movement," 184–187.
8 E.g., Harle and Moisio, *Missä on Suomi*, 88–94.
9 Ibid., 64–88.
10 Nygård, *Suomalainen äärioikeisto maailmansotien välillä*; Silvennoinen, Tikka, and Roselius, *Suomalaiset fasistit;* Kotonen, *Politiikan juoksuhaudat,* 197–212.

11 Kemiläinen, *Suomalaiset, outo Pohjolan kansa.*
12 Tommila, and Pohls, *Herää Suomi.*
13 See Nygård, *Suomalainen äärioikeisto maailmansotien välillä*, 11–14.
14 E.g., Silvennoinen, Tikka, and Roselius, *Suomalaiset fasistit*, 354; Roiko-Jokela, "Suur-Suomi," 77–80.
15 Näre, and Kirves, *Luvattu maa.*
16 Browning, and Joenniemi, "The Ontological Significance," 158–159.
17 Puuronen, "Skinit maailmalla ja Joensuussa," 14; Puuronen, "Puhdas valkoinen rotu," 33–39; Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarinen äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 5.
18 Kotonen, *Politiikan juoksuhaudat*, 157–174.
19 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 130–131, 158.
20 The analysed material includes, more precisely, texts by the NRM's Finnish chapter that elucidate on Finnish identity, the Finns as a population group, and the inclusion of Finland in a pan-Nordic state. Texts written by other chapters of the NRM but translated into Finnish, alongside those composed by guest writers, have been excluded from the analysis. Part of the material has been collected from the "Articles" section of *Kansallinen Vastarinta,* the website of the NRM's Finnish chapter. Another part has been gathered from the Finnish chapter's print magazine *Kansallinen Vastarinta,* which was published during 2011–2012. While several texts touch upon Finnish identity, the Finns, and the inclusion of Finland in a pan-Nordic state, only a handful of them address such topics more extensively. The authors have prioritised these articles in their analysis while nevertheless also incorporating insights from other texts. The NRM's political programme, which was originally produced in Swedish but later translated into Finnish, has been used to contextualise certain findings from the Finnish-language material but is not included in the empirical core of the study itself.
21 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 10–11.
22 Ibid., 11.
23 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 11. See also Pöysti, "Runebergin päivän toimintaa Turussa" for the group's veneration of the 19th-century poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg.
24 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 11.
25 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 6, 10; Tahvanainen, "Vastarintaliike pähkinänkuoressa"; Keränen, "Ratkaisuja Suomen ongelmiin."
26 Lämsä, "Suomalainen rotu ja muuttovirta Suomeen," 14–15.
27 Ibid., 15.
28 Sebastian Lämsä, "Suomalaisena valkoisessa Euroopassa, osa 2."
29 Ibid.
30 Tahvanainen, "Miksi Vastarintaliike eikä perussuomalaiset"; Pöysti, "Runebergin päivän toimintaa Turussa"; Vastarintaliike, "Pohjoismainen yhteistyö ja isänmaallisuus."
31 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 6, 9.
32 Ibid., 10.
33 Ibid., 9.
34 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 10; Tahvanainen, "Sotilaallinen yhteiskuntajärjestys, osa 1," 8.
35 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 6.
36 Ibid., 10.
37 Ibid., 7.
38 Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike, "Helsingissä marssitaan"; KohtiVapautta, "Kohti Vapautta: Juhani Keräsen puhe."
39 Kaila, "Voima asuu mukavuusalueesi ulkopuolella."
40 KohtiVapautta, "Kohti vapautta: Juhani Keräsen puhe."

41 Tahvanainen, "Kansallissosialismi kasvaa luonnosta," 8, 10; Torniainen, "Kansallisosialistinen maailmankuva."
42 Tahvanainen, "Kansallissosialismi kasvaa luonnosta," 13; Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 10.
43 Tahvanainen, "Kansallissosialismi kasvaa luonnosta," 12.
44 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 7–9; Kaila, "Voima asuu mukavuusalueesi ulkopuolella."
45 Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 6; Tahvanainen, "Kansallissosialismi kasvaa luonnosta," 12.
46 Toimitus, "Kansanmurhan vastainen viikko 2015;" Keränen, "Ratkaisuja Suomen ongelmiin;" Tahvanainen, "Kansallissosialismi kasvaa luonnosta," 10. The group used the terms "European race", "white race", and, occasionally, "Aryan race" interchangeably.
47 Tahvanainen, "Sosialismia, joka ei ole suomalaisvastaista;" Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 11; Tahvanainen, "Vastarintaliike pähkinänkuoressa;" Toimitus, "Lapset monikulttuurisuuden uhreina."
48 Lämsä, "Suomalainen rotu ja muuttovirta Suomeen," 14–15.
49 Tahvanainen, "Vain yhteistyö pelastaa Pohjolan," 16; Vastarintaliike, "Pohjoismainen yhteistyö ja isänmaallisuus." Interestingly, the 2012 article in *Kansallinen Vastarinta* also mentions the incorporation of the Baltic states into the pan-Nordic state while possibly also considering the Baltic peoples as part of the "Nordic race". The idea of including the Baltic states into the pan-Nordic state is sporadically mentioned elsewhere in the material and by the other branches of the NRM as well, yet it does not appear in the NRM's political programme. See Holappa, "Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike," 7; Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 129.
50 Torniainen, "Kansallissosialistinen maailmankuva;" Tahvanainen, "Elävä ja taisteleva suomalainen," 11–12. Other such groups included prostitutes and the hyperimpulsive.
51 Tahvanainen, "Yhteistyö tai kuolema," 2; Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike, "Yksi järjestö – Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike"; Vastarintaliike, "Pohjoismainen yhteistyö ja isänmaallisuus."
52 Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike, "Marssimme Helsingissä uuden itsenäisyyden puolesta;" "Eurostoliitossa toisinajattelu on 'terrorismia';" Vastarintaliike, "Kuinka estää valkoisten kansanmurha?"; Toimitus, "Kansanmurhan vastainen viikko 2015."
53 Finland joined the eurozone in 1999.
54 This global financial elite, or a malicious global elite in a wider sense, was often identified by the group as strongly Jewish in composition. See, for example, Tahvanainen, "Vastarintaliike pähkinänkuoressa."
55 Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike, "Marssimme Helsingissä;" KohtiVapautta.com, "Kansallismielinen käsitys vapaudesta;" Toimitus, "Yksityistäminen on todellista korruptiota;" Torniainen, "Isänmaallisuus vs. uskollisuus valtiolle;" Toimitus, "Mauno Koivisto;" Ahokas, "Kansallisomaisuus;" Vastarintaliike, "Kuinka estää valkoisten kansanmurha?"
56 V.K., "Intermarium, Eurooppa ja NATO."
57 Vastarintaliike, "Marssimme Helsingissä;" KohtiVapautta.com, "Kohti Vapautta."
58 Vastarintaliike, "Marssimme Helsingissä;" "Vallankumous."
59 Vastarintaliike, "Pohjoismainen yhteistyö ja isänmaallisuus."
60 Tahvanainen, "Vain yhteistyö pelastaa Pohjolan," 16.
61 Ibid., 16–19.
62 Ibid., 16.

63 Tahvanainen, "Vain yhteistyö pelastaa Pohjolan," 16; Tahvanainen, "Yhteistyö tai kuolema," 2; Vastarintaliike, "Pohjoismainen yhteistyö ja isänmaallisuus."
64 Vastarintaliike, "Pohjoismainen yhteistyö ja isänmaallisuus."
65 Ibid. The 2015 article portrayed Europe overall as veering towards turbulent times, further rendering Nordic cooperation a necessity.
66 Vastarintaliike, "Pohjoismainen yhteistyö ja isänmaallisuus;" Tahvanainen, "Yhteistyö tai kuolema."
67 Holappa, "Kansallissosialistinen tasavalta," 6.
68 Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 222–223; Mussolini, *The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism*, 11–12; Strang, "Places in the African Sun," 17–20.
69 Riis-Knudsen, "National Socialism," 18–21.
70 Gerhard, "Breeding Pigs"; Bassin, "Blood or Soil?"
71 Griffin, "The Palingenetic Core."
72 Longerich, *Heinrich Himmler*, 218; Wilhelmsen, "Heroic Pasts," 287–288.
73 E.g., Kaplan, "The Finnish New Radical Right," 216.
74 Kaila, "Heimosodat, osa 1;" Tahvanainen, "Kansallissosialismi kasvaa luonnosta," 12.
75 See *Sieg Heil Suomi* for the views of Väinö Kuisma on Christianity.
76 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 112; Koskelainen and Hjelm, "Christ vs. Communism;" Siironen, *Mustan lipun alla.*
77 Swanström, *Hakaristin ritarit*, 274–300.
78 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 111–112; Torniainen, "Aktivismintäyteinen päivä Helsingissä."
79 See *Båtresan* for the views of Pekka Siitoin.
80 Lämsä, "Suomalaisena valkoisessa Euroopassa, osa 2."
81 Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 304, 500.
82 Dyck, *Reichsrock*, 87–88, 90–92, 94, 97–98.
83 Torniainen, "Vastarintaliike ja kansallissosialismi."
84 Holappa, "Kansallissosialistinen tasavalta," 6; Nordiska Motståndsrörelsen, *Vår väg*, 16.
85 Nordiska Motståndsrörelsen, *Vår väg*, 23; Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike, "Politiikkamme, kohta 4."
86 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 62, 179.
87 Ibid., 71.
88 Ibid., 160.

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